

The Impact of Images in Consumer Culture
On the Identity of Women

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

In partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree
Doctor of Ministry

By

Joy Sullivan Hicklin

May 2007

To the One who is before all things and who holds all things together (Colossians 1:17).

And to Joy Caroline and Andrew,

Of all the images beckoning you,
I pray you will bow to none;

That you will look beyond the illusions,
And turn to the only One who is wise (Jude 25);

That you will see through

And not just with your eyes;

And walking in light (Psalm 119:105; John 8:12; Ephesians 5:8)

Become all He has created and redeemed you to be,

Restored image bearers—eternally free (I Timothy 6:20; John 8:31-32; I John 5:20-21; Romans 8:29; II Corinthians 3:16-18).

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	iv
Abstract	vii
Chapter One: The Problem and Its Setting	1
Chapter Two: Toward a Theology of the Body	36
Chapter Three: Literature Review	78
Chapter Four: Research Design	91
Chapter Five: Outcomes	99
Appendix A: Recent Historical Setting	140
Appendix B: The Research Questionnaire	152
Appendix C: Further Quotes from Research Arranged Topically	154
Bibliography	163
Vita	176

Acknowledgments

Great is the faithfulness of God exactly expressed in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-3)! It is because of God's loving kindnesses and never-failing fresh compassions that I am not consumed; instead I am purchased. (Lamentations 3:20-24; Acts 20:28; I Corinthians 6:20; 7:13). I gratefully acknowledge His ownership and ask that He will accept this work as worship.

I am appreciative of the staff and members of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Rock Hill, South Carolina, for their encouragement and their enthusiasm for the extension of the kingdom of Christ. I am grateful for the confidence that Dr. Shelton Sanford has placed in me. Dr. Terry Crimm has called forth life. I particularly cherish the women serving on the Women's Ministries Council and must mention Mandy McMehan, Sarah Basha, Lou Ardrey, and Madge Biggers for their heart for God's work within the women in our church and community.

Jeff Ferguson and Angela Boyd from Reformed University Fellowship and Barry Bouchillon and Helen Layman from Campus Crusade for Christ were instrumental in the distribution of surveys to Christian college women. I do not take their support for granted. The Christian college women who responded to the invitation to participate in a research project were good neighbors to me. They have answered questions that would be more comfortable to avoid and have added much insight to future ministry by their sharing.

The prayers of many have sustained this effort. My husband and children, my parents-by-marriage, my parents, sisters, and brothers-in-law, Phyllis Bennett, Chris May, Liz Ebeling, Karen Brownfield, Betty Cardinale, Judy Huitt, Westminster Women's

Ministries Council, and my mentoring group lifted requests to our Lord to my benefit. I joyfully acknowledge the prayers of faithful followers of Christ in my heritage on both sides of my family throughout the generations.

I am the recipient of the fruitful work of the board and faculty of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. David and Louise Rogers were instrumental in my enrollment. Dr. Alice Mathews has winsomely and wisely challenged our cohort toward new heights of lovingly serving God through academic excellence and profound awareness of the needs of those around us—may we be responsive in a way that will honor her investment in our lives. Dr. Gay Hubbard’s supportive instruction has deepened and broadened my understanding of the female bearer of God’s image. I am indebted to Dr. Gwenfair Adams for her work. Sisters in this cohort have continuously blessed my life, in and out of the classroom, by sharing their lives with me. These people who are representative of the mission of Gordon-Conwell bring to mind John 7:38: “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’”

The generosity of my aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Blake Garrett, Senior, provided encouragement to enter the Doctor of Ministry program. Knowing the Garrett family has been a blessing throughout my life. The hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Blake Garrett, Junior, has enriched my life time and time again.

One of the foremost joys in my life has been relationships with my siblings and their children. My five sisters, brother, and brothers-in-law inspire me. I will always look up to them. Never will I forget the unconditional open door into the Sims family and their shaping influence in my life. The Rogers family offers a continual welcome. I stand in awe of my nephews and nieces. I am particularly grateful for the contribution of my

nephew, Caleb Rogers, toward the statistical analysis of this project.

“The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me” (Psalm 16:6). My parents-by-marriage, Dr. Cloud and Carolyn Hicklin, are sources of strength and solace in my life. My father and mother, Doctors Frank and Josephine Sullivan, have demonstrated constant love, abiding faith, and exemplary service. They have nurtured a love of scholarship, not for the sake of knowledge, but for the sake of others. The way both sets of parents live speaks volumes of wisdom without a word.

My children, Joy Caroline and Andrew, have been team players throughout the process. Joy Caroline’s cheerful notes and company have brightened the study area on many a day. Andrew’s playful pranks and willing smiles have provided refreshment. The kickball games have served to replenish one weary from research.

Ephesians 5:25-29 is descriptive of my husband, Dr. Jonathan C. Hicklin, who has loved sacrificially, prayed continually, served joyfully, laughed liberally, and offered his strength willingly throughout our marriage and in this effort. Respecting him is easy. Being his bride is a blessing I could never earn. From my acceptance into seminary until the completion of this writing, he has reminded me that if this work helps just one person, it is worth the effort. He lives the verse engraved on our wedding band: “Oh magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together” (Psalm 34:3) in our home and in his service in the church and community. I acknowledge that without him, this work would not have been possible.

Abstract

Consumerism appears to be the prevailing expression of the materialistic philosophy of the west. It is argued that consumerism may be functionally supplanting Christianity. Within western culture, women are uniquely targeted as both markets and as enticements toward sales. As a result, many women have come to see themselves as consumers rather than worshipers of God and view their bodies as commodities instead of places of worshipful service. This thesis examines the intertwining of images and identities within consumer culture, noting that Christian women may not differ from their non-Christian counterparts in their responses to the images surrounding them.

The literature supports the proposition of this thesis that the penetration of Greek philosophy into Christian ideology has weakened the church and contributes to the inaction and silence of the church in matters upon which she should be acting and into which she should be speaking. The research aimed to discover the extent to which immersion into consumerism influenced the lives and relationships of Christian college women and the images within consumer culture affected their attitudes about their bodies. It also examined whether or not the church was perceived to be a helpful resource regarding issues of embodiment. The findings suggest tension between consumerism and Christianity, the negative impact of images in consumer culture on Christian women's perceptions of their bodies, and that the church has not been a helpful resource for most of the sample population of women in combating the assumptions of consumer culture. The thesis concludes that men and women may benefit from thinking biblically about identity and embodiment. A Christian perspective may free men and women from cultural captivity.

Chapter One

The Problem and Its Setting

Living in both the best and worst of times aptly describes the predicament of many women in developed western countries.¹ In a time in which women have benefited from unprecedented scientific and medical advances, socioeconomic opportunities, and political freedom, women are embattled within their bodies. A large portion of the warfare going on inside has to do with identity. Another major battle deals with images. In a sense, the struggles are the same, for identities, especially for women, have become intertwined with images. Many women have come to view themselves as consumers rather than worshipers and their bodies as commodities rather than temples of God.

Many girls and women, both Christian and non-Christian, do not have a biblical theology of being in a body. The problem is not that women have bodily concerns; the problem is that the women are turning to the ideas of the surrounding culture to address their concerns. The answers they receive from the culture are confusing. It is time to question the answers.

The spirit of the present age is materialism.² One of the characteristics of materialism is consumerism, and “sex is the mysticism of materialism.”³ Thus, for many women, the body is experienced as merchandise in a marketplace.

¹ Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*. (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1942), 3.

² Materialism is defined in *Webster's Ninth Collegiate Dictionary* (1983) as “a theory that physical matter is the only or fundamental reality and that all being and processes and phenomena can be explained as manifestations or results of matter; a doctrine that the only or the highest values or objectives lie in material well-being and in the furtherance of material progress; a preoccupation with or stress upon material rather than intellectual or spiritual things.” For further discussion of the conceptualization and progression of materialism the reader is referred to Nancy R. Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 101-103, 111-112, 157, 170-171, 389-392.

³ Malcolm Muggeridge, *Christ and the Media* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977), 57.

The influence of Greek philosophy lies underneath the surface of the problem.

It is possible that many men and women are more influenced by Greek dualism than Biblical revelation. Many emphasize the spiritual to the neglect of the physical. Some obsess about the physical to the detriment of the spiritual.

To a large extent the Church has been hindered in helping due to infiltration of classic Greek philosophies during and continuing after the patristic period.⁴ The interpretation of Scripture through the lens of culture rather than the light of Christ fostered beliefs that were not in accord with the Word of God. As a result of these beliefs about the body, and, in particular, the female body, relationships have been impeded.⁵ The integrity within and unity among Christians that is to reveal to the world the truth of Christ has been and continues to be at stake in issues surrounding embodiment.⁶ Recent attempts by those who have begun to recognize that there is a struggle within women, have, for the most part, either, ignored Biblical revelation or attempted to put a band-aid of Bible verses over the problem.⁷

The Present Setting

Many Christians do not have a biblical worldview to combat the materialism that is

⁴ The ideas of the classic Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle, will be discussed in the section entitled “The Influence of Greek Philosophy on Christian Theology” on p. 22 of this chapter.

⁵ A thorough survey of history reveals the influence of classic Greek ideas about the female body permeating scientific and religious assumptions. The reader is referred to the five-volume series edited by Duby and Perrot entitled *A History of Women* as well as to Tucker and Liefield’s *Daughters of the Church* for further substantiation of the impact of these ideas on relationships within and outside of the Church.

⁶ The intra-psychic problems with embodiment that girls and women are experiencing are representative of disruptions of integrity of personhood which ultimately impact interpersonal relationships. The prevalence of pornography viewing documented among Christian men demonstrates a struggle within that may alter relationships with real women.

⁷ An example of the secular programs for girls encouraging girls toward self-respect and healthy living is *Girls on the Run*. In the curriculum guide on page 10, Molly Barker writes, “Here in Charlotte, we are mandated to not discuss anything about sex other than abstinence. Hopefully, it is different where you are.” Much of the Christian literature for girls and women promotes self-esteem but does not address body image or health issues from the fullness of a biblical theology. An exception is Lillian Calles Barger’s *Eve’s Revenge* in which the author addresses feminists on body issues with a biblical perspective. Another exception is *Loving Your Body* by Deborah Newman.

prevalent in the west today. In a consumer culture where inciting desire is the objective toward the goal of purchases, the sensuality of the female body is often the enticement. The images of women impact the identity of women and girls in ways that words cannot describe.

In June, 1994, 85 percent of Americans were affiliated with Protestant (61 percent) or Catholic (24 percent) denominations.⁸ The high percentage of Americans affiliated with Christianity is encouraging, but Barna reports that his surveys reveal Americans, including a huge majority of those who refer to themselves as born-again Christians and evangelical Christians, lack a Biblical worldview.⁹ His findings demonstrate that 85 percent of American adults who refer to themselves as born-again and/or evangelical do not qualify as having a Biblical worldview when questioned regarding the foundations of their belief system.¹⁰ In 2003, of the 210 million adults in the United States, about 175 million claimed to be Christian. Approximately eighty million describe themselves as born-again Christians. Of those Christians, roughly seven million have a biblical worldview.¹¹ It is reasonable to assume, then, that the statistics concerning women in the secular studies that will be included in the following paragraphs will be descriptive of many Christian women.

Barna's survey revealed some remarkable distinctions in daily activity, religious activity, and religious belief among three segments of people: those who have a biblical worldview, those who are born again but do not have a biblical worldview, and individuals who are not born again. One notable distinction is that Christians who have a

⁸ George Barna, *Think Like Jesus: Make the Right Decision Every Time* (Brentwood, TN: Integrity Publishers, 2003), 37.

⁹ *Ibid*, xix.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 23.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 24.

biblical worldview are nine times less likely than those who do not have a biblical worldview to view adult-only material on the Internet.¹² Could it be that a biblical way of thinking about the world affects the way a person honors or dishonors his or her body and the bodies of others? What is the worldview of those who do not possess a biblical one? Could it be that consumerism has replaced Christianity in practice?

According to Lewis and Bridger in *The Soul of the Consumer*, “We live in a society where common ideals and political resolve have been largely replaced by shared meanings revolving around brand names and advertising images.”¹³ For example, a nine year old girl who could not correctly spell “skirt” could spell “Esprit.”¹⁴ Increasingly, people in the developed world have come to see themselves as consumers.¹⁵ Lewis and Bridger describe today’s consumers as those with a scarcity of time, attention, and trust. The authors state that their decisions about purchases are determined by factors that are far more profound than lifestyle choices; they are based on core constructs of personality and self-esteem. “For them, . . . the marketplace is their soul and their soul is the marketplace.”¹⁶ The authors choose the noun *soul* for two main reasons: For some people, consumption has taken the place of religious belief as their primary source of solace and comfort. For others, “their choices as consumers are dictated by a need to satisfy an inner hunger.”¹⁷ In a secular sense the word *soul* is equally important since it describes the principal component of thought and action in humans.”¹⁸ A quest for

¹² *Ibid*, 24.

¹³ David Lewis and Darren Bridger, *The Soul of the New Consumer* (London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2000), 13.

¹⁴ James U. McNeal, *The Kids’ Market: Myths and Realities* (Ithaca, NY: Paramount Market Publishing, 1999), 204.

¹⁵ Lewis and Bridger, xii.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 6.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, xii.

authenticity drives new consumers.¹⁹ The quest can lead to indebtedness. According to Godfrey, the average American household owner owed over \$7,500 and 55 percent of adults carry over credit card debt each month.²⁰ What contributes to the need to purchase beyond one's means? Sociologist John Clammer observes, "Shopping is not merely the acquisition of things, it is the buying of identity."²¹

The identity of women is particularly enmeshed with consumerism. Women are strongly linked to consumption, both in the sale and acquisition of products. "Due to a woman's close association with the body and sexual desire, even things that have nothing to do with sex are sold through the use of the form of a seductive woman. Woman embodies desire... Through metaphor woman has become an object of consumption."²² Zaltman defines metaphor as "the engine of the imagination."²³ Metaphor, the representation of one thing in terms of another, can illumine cognitive processes beyond those shown in more literal language.²⁴ Thus, women's bodies are often used to fuel the imagination in order to incite desire, thereby encouraging purchases.

What problem does this metaphor linking women to consumption pose? How does a woman respond to the images? According to Barger,

Our desire to meet the cultural expectations of both appearance and career success traps us in a never-ending pursuit to measure up. This increases our sense of having fallen short. We live with a profound sense of inadequacy. Who are we? What are

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. xii.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.6.

²⁰ Joline Godfrey, *Raising Financially Fit Kids* (Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press, 2003), 16.

²¹ John Clammer in Lewis and Bridger, 13.

²² Lillian C. Barger, *Eve's Revenge: Women and a Spirituality of the Body* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2003), 17. In an article in the *Journal of Psychology and Marketing* Schindler and Holbrook as cited in Lee-Thorp and Hicks advise marketing managers to carefully select female images designed to appeal specifically to the age group of men that the advertisement targets. If the product market is aimed at older men, the model should not look contemporary but vintage. Karen C. Lee-Thorp and Cynthia Hicks, *Why Beauty Matters* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1997).

²³ Gerald Zaltman, *How Customers Think: Essential Insights into the Mind of the Market* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2003), 38.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 77.

we expected to be?”²⁵

In response to the dilemma, “Women’s beauty cult has grown into a twenty-five billion a year industry. It is ready and willing to feed women’s insecurity and help us find our ‘true’ selves.”²⁶

Barger states, “American women of all ages are still being primed by a cultural insistence on a narrowly defined ideal delivered by the mass media.”²⁷ Many are on “the quest to measure up to unattainable standards.”²⁸ An example is the growth of the diet industry which has grown to a forty billion dollar-a-year business. Media critic, Jean Kilbourne, observes, “Overcoming food temptation has replaced sexual chastity as the symbol of female virtue.”²⁹ Barger laments, “When was the last time you heard a woman talk about dieting for health reasons rather than looks? As a way to use the language of the body, excessive dieting seems to prove a woman’s ability to control an otherwise uncontrollable life and attain social legitimacy.”³⁰

Barger comments on the occurrence of diet-promoting advertisements and articles in popular women’s magazine being ten times greater than in men’s magazines.³¹ She reports that dieting is second only to sex in the topic lists of women’s magazines.³² In addition to the frequency of the topic of dieting, about one in four advertisements sends a message “encouraging women to acquire a body that is ‘barely there.’”³³ Studies demonstrate that one half of American women pursue a diet on any given day and

²⁵ Barger, 16.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 16.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 18.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

²⁹ Jean Kilbourne cited in *Ibid.*, 18.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 19.

³² *Ibid.*, 19.

³³ *Ibid.*, 19.

one woman in seven stated in a published research study that they would sacrifice five years of their life if they could obtain their ideal weight.³⁴

In addition to the focus on dieting, more American women are resorting to plastic surgery in the attempt to reinvent their bodies.³⁵ Cosmetic procedures have risen dramatically.

Facelifts alone increased six times from 1990 to 1999. Despite the concern about the safety of silicon implants of the 1980s, breast augmentations increased sixfold in the 1990s. There was a twenty-six percent increase in the procedure (more than 187,000 surgeries) at a cost of \$3000-8000 in the year of 1999 over the year of 1998... In many areas, augmentation has become a rite of passage into womanhood and a suitable high school graduation gift as small breasts are increasingly considered a deformity.³⁶

Mooij notes, "The vast majority of research on what constitutes physical attractiveness has been conducted in Western societies, but mostly in the United States where physical attractiveness of women is judged according to strict criteria."³⁷ He believes that the strict standards of beauty imposed on women lead to a tendency of self-criticism. Matsumoto states, "The typical American woman begins to voice dissatisfaction with her body early in life and continues to do so right into the adult years. Within the U.S. disordered eating and dieting behaviors are more frequent among European Americans than among Asian and African Americans."³⁸ Ingrassia's study in 1995 found that ninety percent of white schoolgirls were dissatisfied with their weight.³⁹ According to Barger, "The obsession with weight starts early, with forty-two percent of girls in first to third grades expressing a desire to be thinner."⁴⁰ McCabe and Ricciardelli

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 19.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 20.

³⁷ Maneke de Mooij, *Consumer Behavior and Culture: Consequences for Global Marketing Advertising* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004).

³⁸ David Matsumoto, D. *Culture and Psychology: People Around the World*, 2nd ed. (Delmar, CA: Wadworth Thomson Learning, 2000), 239 in Mooij, 50.

³⁹ Ingrassia, M. The body of the beholder. *Newsweek*, 24 April 1995 in Mooij, 50.

(2003) demonstrated that girls as young as eight years-old are engaging in dieting strategies.⁴¹ Brumberg reports that by age thirteen, fifty-three percent of American girls are unhappy with their bodies; by age seventeen, seventy-eight percent are dissatisfied.⁴²

Newman states, “The problem of negative body image is endemic in American culture and the developed world.”⁴³ She decries,

For almost two decades as a Christian counselor, I’ve listened to girls and women describe their body hate. They’ve mainly focused on their hips, stomachs, thighs, and breasts (and now even arms)... When is it going to stop?...There’s something about her body that she doesn’t like. It doesn’t quite fit with her perception of what is beautiful... a woman’s body hate can lead to depression, eating disorders, and unneeded surgery. This kind of preoccupation with her appearance can even be fatal through suicide, botched surgery, or deadly complications from eating disorders. It is a serious problem.⁴⁴

The preoccupation with appearances that is rampant in the twenty-first century is not confined to the teenage years. According to Newman, it is wreaking havoc in the lives of girls, teenagers, and women. She states that most women experience feelings of mild shame and occasional negative thoughts but others are trapped in their body hate perpetually.⁴⁵ A licensed counselor informed Barger that in ninety-five percent of her female cases, there is an entangled body issue.⁴⁶ On an informal basis Barger requested stories from women regarding their embodiment. She received stories

of the internalization of the outside viewer’s gaze, not the internalization of emotions based on physical experiences like childbirth... Few women were able to describe what it feels like to dance, float on water, or run—that is, what it actually feels like to live through a body.⁴⁷

⁴⁰ Barger, 19.

⁴¹ Marita P. McCabe and Lina A. Ricciardelli, “Body image and strategies to lose weight and increase muscle among boys and girls,” *Health Psychology* 22, no. 1 (January 2003): 39-46.

⁴² Joan J. Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls*, (New York: Random House, 1997), xxiv.

⁴³ Deborah J. Newman, *Loving Your Body* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2002), 104.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 104.

⁴⁶ Barger, 36.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 36.

Pipher laments,

In all the years I've been a therapist, I've yet to meet one girl who likes her body....They have been culturally conditioned to hate their bodies, which are after all themselves. When I speak to classes, I ask any woman in the audience who feels good about her body to come up afterward. I want to hear about her success experience. I have yet to have a woman come up.⁴⁸

She writes that there has been an explosion of eating disorders in girls since the 1980s.

Referring to these girls she states, "To conform to the cultural messages about women and attractiveness... they are willing to make themselves sick."⁴⁹ She writes

that the difference between young women with eating disorders and their peers is only a matter of degree, that most adolescent girls worry about their weight, feel fat, diet, and feel guilty when they eat. She writes, "Studies report that on any given day in America, half our teenage girls are dieting and that one in five young women has an eating disorder."⁵⁰

Statistics compiled by the Media Center at the Judge Baker Child Guidance Center in Boston include the disheartening figure that one-third of twelve-year-old girls try to lose weight through dieting, vomiting, laxatives, or diet pills.⁵¹

According to Pipher,

Girls feel an enormous pressure to be beautiful and are aware of constant evaluations of their appearance... The right look has always mattered, but now it's harder to obtain... The standards of beauty are more stringent...Miss Americas have become taller and slimmer over the years. In 1951, Miss Sweden was 5'7" tall and weighed 151 pounds. In 1983, Miss Sweden was 5'9" tall and weighed 109 pounds. What is culturally accepted as beautiful is achieved only with great artifice—photo croppings, camera angles, and composite bodies are necessary to get the pictures we now see of beautiful women. Even the stars cannot meet our cultural ideals without great cost.

⁴⁸ Mary B. Pipher, *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1994), 184.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 185.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁵¹ David Elkind, *The Hurried Child: Growing Up Too Fast*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing, 2001), 86.

Dolly Parton dieted until she looked ill. Jamie Lee Curtis, who worked months to get in shape for the movie, *Perfect*, felt her body was not right for the part. Jane Fonda and Princess Di have both had eating disorders.⁵²

Many studies report that dissatisfaction with body image is pervasive, particularly among white middle-class girls. Nichter, an anthropologist who has studied the culture of teenage girls, explores influences on their sense of self, including those of peers, parents, and the media. In one of her studies, many girls described the “perfect girl” whom they aspired to emulate: “She was 5’7”, weighed between 100 and 110 pounds, and was usually blonde with long, flowing hair. Her perfect body was described as a ticket to the ‘perfect life.’”⁵³ Listening to the girls speak about this elusive ideal, Nichter was struck by the uniformity of their descriptions. Comparing themselves to the ‘perfect’ girl led these young women to feel frustrated and dissatisfied with their own appearance. “Rather than focusing on their own attributes, many girls seemed to derive their sense of self from their perceptions of what they saw in the mirror.”⁵⁴

Elkind establishes a cultural contribution to the questions that adolescents are asking about their identity and the problems of attaining a secure sense of personal identity. He ascertains that the assumption that society makes about the competence of children rushes them into incomplete maturity. Such rushed young people tend to define themselves narrowly, in terms of accomplishment and not in terms of the many social, emotional, and intellectual facets that make up full personality.⁵⁵ According to Brumberg, the body is at the center of the crisis of confidence that researchers note is occurring

⁵² Pipher, 56.

⁵³ Mimi Nichter, “Listening to girls talk about their bodies,” *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, 9 no. 3 (2000): 182.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 186.

⁵⁵ Elkind, 140.

among preadolescent and adolescent girls.⁵⁶ Could it be, then, that a young woman may equate her sense of self with her body, defining her identity, not so much in other accomplishments, as in her ability to achieve the ideal image? Brumberg states that the body is so central to definitions of the self that psychologists sometimes use numerical scores of “body esteem” and “body dissatisfaction” to evaluate a girl’s mental health.⁵⁷

Many reasons are postulated for the dissatisfaction with the body among young women. The unrealistically thin body ideal could be partially responsible for such rampant discontent. As girls mature physically, their body fat increases in preparation for childbearing. Although the increase in body fat is a natural biological process, the effects of puberty and changing morphology often lead to negative changes in body satisfaction. The further a pubescent girl is in the process of maturation, the greater is her tendency to be dissatisfied with body size and shape.⁵⁸ Field et al. link discontentment with body image and shape with the frequency of reading fashion magazines. Sixty-nine percent of the youthful female population in their study reported that magazines influenced their idea of the perfect body shape; 47 percent wanted to lose weight because of magazine pictures.⁵⁹ Neumark Sztainer et al. also propose the influence of television and music videos on preadolescent girls.⁶⁰

Crocker reports that body image dissatisfaction is more closely related to self-esteem for girls than boys.⁶¹ In a study examining gender differences in body dissatisfaction and

⁵⁶ Brumberg, xxiv.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, xxiv.

⁵⁸ McCabe and Ricciardelli, 39-46.

⁵⁹ Alison E. Field and others, “Exposure to mass media and weight concern among girls,” *Pediatric* 103, no. 3 (March 1999): 36-39.

⁶⁰ Diane Neumark Sztainer and others, “Primary prevention of disordered eating among preadolescent girls: Feasibility and short-term effect of a community-based intervention,” *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 100, no. 12 (December 2000): 1455-1474.

self-esteem in adolescent girls and boys, Furnham, Badmin, and Sneade report the association of body dissatisfaction with self-esteem only in girls. In their study, an additional finding was that 74.6 percent of the girls chose an ideal figure that was thinner than their current figure. They concluded that the high incidence of dieting and weight concerns among women can be considered normative discontent.⁶²

In addition to the relationship of body image to identity, Crocker states that physical self-perceptions are integral to physical activity behaviors during adolescence. Those with greater social physique anxiety, the concern one has about the body in interactions with others, may become passive bystanders rather than active participants in physical activity.⁶³ This may be the reason why physical activity drastically declines in adolescent females. Crocker laments the difficulties of assessing body mass indexes due to biases in weight disclosure among younger females.⁶⁴ Could anxiety about the body be an aspect of young girls succumbing to passivity? Do they begin to see themselves as objects that need to be attractive instead of whole people who are made to impact the world?

Pipher reports, "The way girls handle the problems of adolescence can have implications for their adult lives."⁶⁵ She states that many women struggle with the repressed pain of unresolved adolescent questions regarding the "betrayals of self in order to be pleasing."⁶⁶ She mentions the experience of shame and embarrassment about their

⁶¹ Peter Crocker, "Predicting change in physical activity, dietary restraint, and social physique anxiety in adolescent girls: Examining covariance in physical self-perceptions," *Canadian Journal of Public Health* 94, no. 5 (May 2003): 332-337.

⁶² Furnham and others, "Body image dissatisfaction: Gender differences in eating attitudes, self-esteem, and reasons for exercise," *The Journal of Psychology* 136, no. 6 (November 2002): 581-597.

⁶³ Crocker, 332-337.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Pipher, p.24.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.25.

bodies that many women experience along with the desire to be accepted, “so much time and energy has been wasted pretending to be what others wanted.”⁶⁷

According to Pipher, the problems of women are complicated and metaphorical. In dealing with the pain that women feel related to their embodiment and their resultant thoughts and behaviors, she admits, “I need to ask again and again, ‘What are you trying to tell me?’”⁶⁸ With all of the studies that support women’s verbal acumen, it is interesting that they cannot put into words the pain they are experiencing in the area of body issues. What is the silence saying? Does the difficulty in attempting to describe the pain implicate the powerful impact of the images in consumer culture on the identities of women? How did such a strong influence develop?⁶⁹ What is at stake in the intertwining of images and identity among girls and women?

What is at Stake? The Intertwining of Image and Identity and the Fairy Tale

What is at stake in the intertwining of images and identity? Consumer culture appears to be threatening fullness of personhood. For women and girls, both body and soul are under siege.

According to Pipher, America places “enormous emphasis on the gratification of every need.”⁷⁰ To the detriment of the younger generation, “Adulthood, as presented by the media, implies drinking, spending money, and being sexually active.”⁷¹ Marketing exists to highlight the discrepancy between the actual and the ideal, thereby promoting desire. Pipher states,

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁶⁹ The interested reader is directed to Appendix A entitled “Recent Historical Setting” (pp. 140-151) for a brief synopsis of nineteenth- and twentieth-century contributing factors to the present problems that women and girls face as they attempt to voice their pain in enveloping consumer culture.

⁷⁰ Pipher, 202.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 82.

There's big money in creating wants and then encouraging consumers that these wants are needs, even rights. We are taught to go for it. We're encouraged that if it feels right, it is right. And we're told, 'Don't worry, spend money.'⁷²

She continues,

Advertising teaches that pain can be handled by buying and consuming products... The junk values of our mass culture socialize girls to expect happiness and regard pain as unusual. Advertising suggests that if they aren't happy, something is wrong. Pain is presented as something that can and should be avoided by consuming the right things. It's treated as an anomaly, not an intrinsic and inescapable part of being human.⁷³

Pipher notes the damage of years of exposure to sophisticated advertising that preaches that happiness is derived from consuming the right products. Although young girls may discern the small lies told in order to make money, ("We do not consider that a sin—we call it marketing") they may not understand the big lie, "which is that consumer goods are essential to happiness."⁷⁴

Elkind is deeply concerned about the accumulated impact of the messages that he deems irresponsible.⁷⁵ He expresses concern about television being "an electronic mirror that reflects a vague or ambiguous image... From this standpoint, television serves as a way of finding out who and what we are."⁷⁶ Statistics compiled by the Media Center at the Judge Baker Guidance Center in Boston regarding the decade of the 1990s reveal that children consume forty hours of media a week and twenty thousand commercials a year; also, corporations spent twenty times more in marketing to children than they did the previous decade. The Media Center also reveals that girls' discontent about body image is directly related to the frequency of reading

⁷² *Ibid.*, 202.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 202.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 243.

⁷⁵ Elkind, 242.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 87.

fashion magazines.⁷⁷ Barger states, “Fabricated images of ideal femininity have destructive implications....What does this unobtainable beauty do to the romantic aspirations of men who must settle for the ordinary?”⁷⁸ What happens when what it means to be ‘the beloved’ is no longer articulated with words but communicated with explicit images?”⁷⁹ One result, according to Pipher, is that “Many girls scorn their true bodies and work for a false body. They allow the culture to define who they should be.”⁸⁰

Why do girls and women internalize the images? Belenky and her colleagues studied the epistemological processes of women.⁸¹ It seems that many women fit into the

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁷⁸ The reader is referred to Chapter 11: “Men and Nonrelational Sexuality” in *Am I My Brother’s Keeper: What the Social Services Don’t Tell Us About Masculinity* by Van Leeuwen for an extensive study of this topic. One statement suffices for support here: “Soft porn makes real-life potential partners seem less adequate, increases men’s tendency to view women in purely sexual terms.” Mary S. Van Leeuwen, *Am I My Brother’s Keeper: What the Social Services Don’t Tell Us About Masculinity* (Downer’s Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2002), 215.

⁷⁹ Barger, 46.

The reader is referred to Chapters Seven and Eleven, “The Goddess of Beauty” and “When Men Worship Beauty” in Lee-Thorp and Hicks, *Why Beauty Matters*. Karen C. Lee-Thorp and Cynthia Hicks, *Why Beauty Matters* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1997), 108-124, 178-191.

The reader is also referred to Chapter Six “Making Love Alone: Videocentrism and the Case of Modern Pornography” by Eric M. Kramer in *Ideals of Feminine Beauty*. Eric M. Kramer, “Making Love Alone: Videocentrism and the Case of Modern Pornography,” in *Ideals of Feminine Beauty: Philosophical, Social, and Cultural Dimensions*, ed. Karen A. Callaghan (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), 79-94.

Another source is Chapter Five “Sex” in Naomi Wolf’s *The Beauty Myth*, p. 134-178. She writes, “Defenders of pornography base their position on the idea of freedom of speech, casting pornographic imagery as language (p. 135).” She concludes her chapter with the recognition that the beauty myth hurts men: “It hurts them by teaching them how to avoid loving women. It prevents them from actually seeing women. It does not, contrary to its own ideology, stimulate and gratify sexual longing. In suggesting a vision in place of a woman, it has a numbing effect, reducing all senses but the visual, and impairing even that (p.174).” Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1994), 134-178.

⁸⁰ Pipher, 57.

⁸¹ In *Women’s Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind* (1986), Belenky and her co-investigators chose to listen to women in an interview format in order to study their epistemological development. Epistemology, as defined by Webster, is “the study or a theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge, especially with reference to its limits and validity.” Belenky et. al. credit William Perry’s work, *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years* (1970) as the inspiration for their study. Perry charted the intellectual development of Harvard undergraduate students through interviews gathered each spring. He depicts a sequential passage in the development of knowledge in four stages he terms *positions*. The positions progress from *basic dualism* to *multiplicity* to *relativism subordinate* to full *relativism*. The stages that Belenky et. al. noted in the interpretative frameworks of women compliment those of Perry except for the addition of a category termed *silence* that precedes *received*, *subjective*, *procedural*, and *constructed knowledges*.

category that Belenky named “received knowing.” “Received knowers” believe what they are told to believe.⁸² Within this level of learning women take authority at face value. In a postmodern society where images reign, could the media images, for many women, be authoritative?

As a girl seeks to locate herself in relation to the world, she is confronted with images which she presumes to be both authoritative and prescriptive. These images are not just false in a spiritual sense, but in a secular sense as well. Separating fact from fantasy in a world full of images can prove to be confusing for young and old. Adolescence is the time, according to Pipher, when girls become the objects of others’ lives.⁸³ Unfortunately many girls “stop being and start seeming.”⁸⁴ They start wondering how they can best please others. At precisely the time they begin this inquiry, they move into the broader culture that evaluates based on appearance and sensual allure.⁸⁵

Barger comments that through the years of growing up, “a series of messages shape how we will finally feel about our bodies as grown women. From an early age we are trained to live as if under a constant gaze.”⁸⁶ The self is never an isolated unity as it is always a part of a social environment. The South African word *ubuntu* aptly describes the social nature as it means, “I can only be me through your eyes.”⁸⁷ “Turn a pair of eyes on me,” Alice Koller writes, “and instantly I begin looking into them for myself.”⁸⁸

According to Belenky, “All women grow up having to deal with historically and culturally engrained definitions of femininity and womanhood—one common theme

⁸² Mary F. Belenky and others, *Women’s Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), 15.

⁸³ Pipher, 22.

⁸⁴ Simone de Beauvoir as cited in Pipher, 22.

⁸⁵ Pipher, 23.

⁸⁶ Barger, 32.

⁸⁷ Mooij, 135.

⁸⁸ Alice Koller as cited in Belenky, 209.

being that women, like children, should be seen and not heard.”⁸⁹ Unfortunately, the current definition of femininity is that of both a consumer and commodity, simultaneously. The images that convey the meaning of femininity are powerful and unrelenting.

Because women at the position of received knowledge believe that all knowledge originates outside of the self, they must look to others even for self-knowledge. Thus, the conscious attempts at identity formation that these women make are often expressed in such questions as ‘What do they think of me? And ‘What would they want me to become?’⁹⁰

In looking outward for self-knowledge, received knowers organize their attempts at self-definition around the social expectations that define concrete goals.⁹¹

If one can see the self only as mirrored in the eyes of others, the urgency is great to live up to others’ expectations, in the hope of preventing others from forming a dim view. Thus, women of received knowledge listen carefully and try hard to live up to the images that others have held up to them. They are especially at the mercy of authorities’ judgments.⁹²

In postmodernity images have taken precedence over language.⁹³ Unfortunately there is much that the picture does not say. It is left to the beholder to understand what the image conveys. According to Tackett, “Assumptions are the most dangerous form of knowledge, caught and bought without an open, conscious dialogue.”⁹⁴

The experience of interconnection that contributes to the development of identity is often missing in the current disconnected consumer society. The image, then, invents identity. Quickly girls and women assume from the pictures that perfection is acceptable,

⁸⁹ Belenky, 5.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁹² *Ibid.* 48-49.

⁹³ For further information on the historical movement of communication from oral to scribal to print to images the reader is referred to the message by Ravi Zacharias entitled “Mind Games in a World of Images” presented in Ravi Zacharias, speaker, “Christ, the Arts, and the Media,” cassette recording, (Atlanta, GA: Ravi Zacharias International Ministries).

⁹⁴ Del Tackett, speaker, “The Truth Project,” 11 November, 2005, Colorado Springs, CO.

implying that imperfection means rejection. To conform to the image of the ideal is a rational choice for a received knower, one whose moral language is the “ought” and “should,”⁹⁵ and who has it in her nature to make and maintain relationships.⁹⁶ The problem is that fully identifying with the ideal image is impossible.

Muggeridge did not find it surprising that the camera was originally named the *camera obscura*, as it obscures reality.⁹⁷ According to Muggeridge, “Not only *can* the camera lie, it always lies...The faking possibilities in the cutting room are well-nigh illimitable...The media have created a world of fantasy that is largely being taken as the real world.”⁹⁸ He quotes four powerful (seemingly prophetic) lines by Blake that aptly describe the setting of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries in which the camera images induce the acceptance of fantasy as actuality:

This life’s dim window of the soul
Distorts the heavens from Pole to Pole,
And leads you to believe a lie
When you see with, not through, the eye.⁹⁹

Barger assents,

Continual exposure to the media ideal skews reality for all of us...The constant pressure to measure up to the physical ideal makes us ask whether we occupy the body or the body occupies us...The problem is that in the end a flesh and blood woman cannot compete with the fantasy of the feminine ideal.¹⁰⁰

Barger continues,

The image demands that we meet its expectations, so we find ourselves bound to try to negotiate our human imperfection with its perfection. An unattainable but seductive illusion, the image works by setting up the criteria for legitimation and producing in us self-conscious shame. We find ourselves in a narcissistic and infinite

⁹⁵ Belenky, 48.

⁹⁶ Jean Baker Miller (1976) as cited in Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982), 48.

⁹⁷ Muggeridge, 62.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 30, 65, 60.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹⁰⁰ Barger, 19, 36, 22.

house of mirrors, buying the false promises of advertisers in order to make up for our lack. The pursuit of beauty is no longer about seeking what is just and true but about oppression, the message that we are never good enough. Beauty cut off from the transcendent virtues of justice and truth serves as a counterfeit...[She who is] under the domain of the media ideal of 'beautiful,' becomes a shadow woman, an illusion; a representation of the cultural image she has been taught to serve.¹⁰¹

Muggeridge realized "There is something terrible about becoming an image."¹⁰²

Through the appropriation of women as target markets and the incorporation of the female body into the images within consumerism, women are intimately involved in the idol of consumption even as they are taught to serve it. Zacharias makes a point about living in the pain of the media culture by telling a story shared with him by someone who had just experienced a heart attack. The person noted that when he encountered any other pain, he was able to stay objective about it, to label it such as, "My arm is hurting."

When his heart stopped beating, the pain was not the same as any other. During the heart attack it was as though he himself was "in the pain." He could not stand apart from it in his mind. He could not separate it from his very being.¹⁰³ Many women have a similar experience when it comes to being in a body that is considered a commodity in a culture of consumerism. It is a painful process, and she is taught to consume (in a multitude of ways) in order to anesthetize the discomfort. She may follow that teaching or go to the other extreme, denying her physical needs in order to become what is deemed a desirable object, merchandise in a society of exchange.

Life becomes centered in the object it worships.¹⁰⁴ When that object is an image, life can become a fairy tale, a mere fantasy. For young women, succumbing to the image as a source of identity induces slumber instead of awakening. In the myth of

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 46, 45.

¹⁰² Muggeridge, 47.

¹⁰³ Zacharias, "Christ, the Arts, and the Media."

¹⁰⁴ Carol A. Wise, *Religion in Illness and Health* (New York: Harper Collins, 1942).

Persephone, she learns that narcissism leads to death. Barger writes,

Desire can be misguided by cultural images that woo us, tyrannizing us as evidenced by our abuse of our bodies through a variety of means, including sex and food. Our desires can be directed toward serving cultural icons that promise significance and control but never really provide either. In our search for meaning we serve these icons relentlessly.¹⁰⁵

In the worshiping of false images it is always winter and never spring.¹⁰⁶

The values that characterize a society cannot be observed directly, but they can be inferred from various cultural products such as fairy tales.¹⁰⁷ Newman laments about her counseling, “I despise hearing this same painful story, repeated over and over. It begins predictably as, ‘Once upon a time,’ except there is no ‘happily ever after.’”¹⁰⁸ It appears that many women may have the recall of what it was like to live through the body and see through the eyes of a child, but find themselves living ambivalently with a body just as they see with, not through, the eyes.

Pipher writes,

Fairy tales capture the essence of this phenomenon. Young women eat poisoned apples or prick their fingers with poisoned needles and fall asleep for a hundred years... The story of Ophelia, from Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, shows the destructive forces that affect young women. As a girl, Ophelia is happy and free but with adolescence she loses herself. When she falls in love with Hamlet, she lives for his approval. She has no inner direction; rather, she struggles to meet the demands of Hamlet and her father. Her value is determined utterly by their approval. Ophelia is torn apart by her efforts to please.¹⁰⁹

Erikson asserts that the female “holds her identity in abeyance as she prepares to attract the man by whose name she will be known, by whose status she will be defined, the man

¹⁰⁵ Barger, 37, 38.

¹⁰⁶ C.S. Lewis alludes to the myth of Persephone in his description of Narnia as “always winter” in “The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe in Clyde S. Lewis, *The Chronicles of Narnia* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1950), 117.

¹⁰⁷ Mooij, 27.

¹⁰⁸ Newman, 3.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 19, 20.

who will rescue her from emptiness and loneliness by filling ‘the inner space.’¹¹⁰

Gilligan concludes,

While for men, identity precedes intimacy and generativity in the optimal cycle of human separation and attachment, for women these tasks seem instead to be fused. Intimacy goes along with identity, as the female comes to know herself as she is known, through her relationships with others.¹¹¹

Bruno Bettelheim describes the dynamics of female adolescence as depicted in the fairy tales. He notes that the onset of menses precedes a time of passivity. In the deep sleeps of Snow White and Sleeping Beauty, he sees an “inner concentration which he considers to be the necessary counterpart to the activity of adventure.”¹¹² Could this pensive time be the time when girls today are becoming obsessed with the images of the ideal so that they turn their interior thoughts and feelings into an exterior project? The adolescent heroines awaken to marry the prince, indicating that “their identity is inwardly and interpersonally defined...For women, in Bettelheim’s as in Erikson’s account, identity and intimacy are intricately conjoined.”¹¹³

Today, as in the past, it appears that the way women and girls attempt to achieve intimacy is to become the ideal; thus, the image is intertwined with identity. Because the image of the ideal is unattainable, many young women, just at the time when their bodies are preparing them to be able to give birth, die inside. Could the “dark continent” of the female psyche that eluded Freud’s understanding somehow be related to this phenomenon so aptly described in fairy tales?¹¹⁴

According to Pipher, “Many women regain their preadolescent authenticity with

¹¹⁰ Eric Erikson (1968) as cited in Gilligan, 12.

¹¹¹ Gilligan, 12.

¹¹² Bruno Bettelheim (1976) as cited in Gilligan, 13.

¹¹³ Gilligan, 13.

¹¹⁴ Sigmund Freud (1926), *The Question of Lay Analysis*, vol. XX, 212 in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. and ed. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1961) as cited in Gilligan, 24.

menopause.”¹¹⁵ From the age of the onset of menstruation until it ceases is a period of about thirty-five to forty years—too long to be without fullness of life. For too many women the fairy tale may not be fiction after all. How has the Church responded to the fiction? What has disabled the Church from responding to this fiction?

The Influence of Greek Philosophy on Christian Theology

The Church Fathers, Catholic clergy, Scholastics, and Reformers were influenced primarily by the classical thinkers Plato and Aristotle in a way that has woven into the thought patterns of the present Body of Christ. Pearcey states, “The dichotomy in our minds is the greatest barrier to liberating the power of the gospel across the whole of culture today.”¹¹⁶ Pearcey sees the split between the sacred and the secular as a dualism initiated by the weaving of Western philosophy into the Christian faith. She believes that the influence of Greek philosophy on Christianity explains why many western Christians do not understand the call of God on the totality of life. Closely akin to the division of the sacred from the secular is the division between the spiritual and material. It is critical to understand the impact of embracing the classic “dualisms and dichotomies of various kinds” as they blur the comprehensive call of God.¹¹⁷

The classical thinkers Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle taught much that was good. They emphasized the rational order of the universe, which was later to become an important inspiration for the development of modern science. They stood against the materialists and hedonists of their day, asserting the eternal ideals of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty.¹¹⁸ Christian thinkers found some of the ideas very congenial, and “eventually

¹¹⁵ Pipher, 26.

¹¹⁶ Nancy R. Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 20.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 73.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 76.

they began adopting many elements of classical philosophy as intellectual tools to give philosophical expression to their own biblical faith.”¹¹⁹ This sharing of the intellectual concepts of their day was natural. But this turning to the Greek philosophers instead of to Christ has caused some major injuries throughout the centuries, one of them being what Francis Schaeffer refers to as a “‘two story’ view of reality.”¹²⁰ In classical thought the material and spiritual realms are separate and opposing. When examining classical Greek thought, the linking of woman to the material realm becomes apparent.

Socrates (469-399 B.C.) was convinced of the goodness of knowledge and that ignorance was the only evil.¹²¹ His followers in philosophy applied reason rather than the senses to answer life’s questions. Plato (428-354 B.C.) wondered what a perfect world would entail and defined it in terms of Forms, the perfect models for Matter, earth’s errors and illusions. For Plato, knowledge is acquired by becoming free from the senses.

In essence, Plato was offering a twofold origin of the world. Both Form and Matter are eternal: Form represents reason and rationality, while the eternal flow of formless Matter is inherently evil and chaotic. This twofold view of origins led to a two-story view of reality, with Form in the upper story and Matter in the lower story.¹²²

Plato associates women with the lower story, Matter. In Plato’s *Republic*, women were subordinates and treated with suspicion and disrespect. Children are removed from mothers and nurses who are held responsible for their miseducation.¹²³ Thus, women

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

¹²⁰ Francis A. Schaeffer, *Escape from Reason and The God Who Is There in The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, Ill: Crossway, 1982). Schaeffer begins with Thomas Aquinas instead of the Greek philosophers, but his critique is similar to the more detailed analysis of Herman Dooyeweerd in *Roots of Western Culture: Pagan, Secular, and Christian Options* (Toronto: Wedge, 1979).

¹²¹ Jeremy Weate and Peter Lawman, *A Young Person’s Guide to Philosophy* (New York: DK Publishing, Inc., 1998), 13.

¹²² Pearcey, 75.

were associated with Matter and ignorance, both considered evil.

Aristotle was fascinated by the natural world and believed that the perfect forms of Plato were part of life instead of apart from it; everything in nature was striving toward its unique form of perfection. Thus, Aristotle believed all natural processes to be *teleological*, or goal-oriented. Aristotle attempted to organize creation with the goal of categorizing all areas of human knowledge. Without microbiology to prove otherwise, he claimed that men carried the human “seed.”¹²⁴ He believed that the “female sperm” was deficient in energy compared to that of the male, indicating female inferiority.¹²⁵ He relegated women to the category of nature and men to that of reason, implying not only women’s inferiority, but also her association with evil. To Aristotle, “The problem of gender...leads to several dichotomies in which the feminine is always characterized as negativity, deformation, or lack.”¹²⁶ Aristotle’s assumptions about gender distinctions have had far-reaching implications.¹²⁷

Epicurus (342-371 B.C.) thought that human existence was just a random grouping of atoms that fell apart after death. Epicurus taught that matter is all there is and the point of life is to achieve happiness and friendship.¹²⁸ Above the entrance to the school that he founded around 300 B.C. were the words, “Pleasure is the highest good.”¹²⁹ Instead of

¹²³ Giulia Sissa, “The Sexual Philosophies of Plato and Aristotle,” in *A History of Women in the West, Volume I: From Greek Goddesses to Christian Saints*, general eds. Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, ed. Pauline S. Pantel, 79 (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992).

¹²⁴ Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 78.

¹²⁵ Sissa in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume I*, 66-67.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 72.

¹²⁷ The reader who is interested in the impact of Aristotle’s assumptions is referred to Chapter 2 “The Nature of Women” by Claude Thomasset, translated by Arthur Goldhammer, in *A History of Women in the West, Volume II: Silences of the Middle Ages*, general eds. Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, ed. Christine Kaplish-Zuber (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994), 43-69.

¹²⁸ Stephen D. Shores, “Image of God and the Flesh: An Exploration of the Image of God and the Flesh as a Basis for a Biblical Counseling Model” (Doctoral diss., South Hamilton, MA: Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, 1999), 16.

¹²⁹ Weate and Lawman, 19.

reason as the path to the good life, he substituted the senses. “Platonist schools attacked Epicurus for teaching ‘unbridled lust’... Plato had regarded the “desires and cravings of the body as the means whereby the soul was bewitched, stained and polluted.”¹³⁰ “In Hellenic culture, the sarx, then, under the spur of misconceived Epicurean thought, became even more vilified as the enemy of the soul.”¹³¹

Early Christian thinkers aligned themselves firmly with the classicists. While opposing Epicurean materialism, they embraced dualism. The Church Fathers wanted to affirm the reality of the spiritual realm. The Forms described by Plato were reinterpreted as the designs God used in creating the world. “The result was a kind of Christianized classicism that became the dominant philosophical position in Europe from late antiquity throughout the Middle Ages and beyond, while Epicureanism was nearly forgotten.”¹³²

Plato, and the later adaptation of his philosophy, neo-Platonism, had the greatest impact on the Church Fathers and Christian thinkers throughout the Middle Ages. Philo of Alexandria (20 B.C. to 45 A.D.), a Hellenized Jew, believed in Moses’ teachings but attempted to combine Greek philosophy with the Old Testament Scriptures.¹³³ Philo followed Plato’s leading when he distinguished between the intellect and sensation, considering the intellect to be masculine and sensation to be feminine.¹³⁴

Lactantius (c. 240-c.320), a Latin Christian apologist who emphasized man as God’s noblest work compared with the animal kingdom, nevertheless embraced dualism: “this worthless body with which we are clothed.”¹³⁵ He believed that the body is

¹³⁰ Shores, 104.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹³² Pearcey, 391.

¹³³ David Cairn, *The Image of God in Man* (London: Fontana Library of Theology and Philosophy, 1973).

¹³⁴ Sissa in Duby and Perrot (1992), *A History of Women in the West, Volume I*, 46.

¹³⁵ Hugh D. McDonald, *The Christian view of Man* (Westchester, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1981), 69.

produced according to natural law, but the soul is directly communicated by God.

Plotinus (205-270) blended Plato's dualism with Eastern mysticism into a mixture referred to as "neo-Platonism." He taught that the world was a radiation from a non-personal Spirit and that matter was the lowest level of this radiation. Because matter was the farthest from the Absolute, it was defined as evil. Therefore, the material body was something negative to be saved by ascetic practices that suppressed bodily desires. The body was considered a 'prison house,' from which the spirit must be liberated in order to join the Infinite from which it emanated. From the beginning, neo-Platonism was in opposition to Christianity.¹³⁶

Yet many of the church fathers were influenced by Platonism and neo-Platonism, including Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Jerome, and Augustine.¹³⁷

This dualistic view of creation led naturally to a dualistic view of the Christian life. Thus Augustine embraced an ethic of asceticism, based on the assumption that the physical world and bodily functions were inherently inferior, a cause of sin. The way to reach the higher levels of spiritual life was by renunciation and deprivation of physical wants... He also treated marriage as inferior to celibacy, and even recommended that married clergy not live with their wives... Partly because Augustine (354-430) was such a towering figure in church history, a kind of Christianized Platonism remained the *lingua franca* among theologians all the way through the Middle Ages. It is a prominent thread woven through the writings of Boethius, John Scotus Erigena, Anselm, and Bonaventure, and was not challenged until the thirteenth century, when the works of Aristotle were reintroduced into Europe¹³⁸

Aquinas (1225-1274) reintroduced Aristotle's proposition: that all natural processes are purposeful, and aimed the idea as a weapon against the Platonic philosophy that the material world (Matter) is inherently inferior. Aquinas succeeded in his battle against the asceticism of his day, but in adopting Aristotle's views regarding the immanence of the nature and the transcendence of God, he "retained the dualistic framework of Greek

¹³⁶ Pearcey, 386.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 76.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 77.

philosophy while changing the terminology.”¹³⁹

The Reformers wanted to overcome the medieval dualism and to recover the unity of life and knowledge under the authority of God’s Word... They argued that the medieval scholastics had accommodated [themselves] far too much to pagan philosophers such as Aristotle, and they urged a more critical attitude toward the alleged truths of reason arrived at apart from divine revelation.”¹⁴⁰

Luther was not against reason but against reason applied outside of God’s revelation. The Reformers sought a new paradigm in which divine revelation would be the illuminating light for all areas of study. Pearcey states,

Despite all this, the Reformers emphatic rejection of the nature/grace dualism was not enough to overcome an age-old pattern of thought. The problem was that they failed to craft a *philosophical* vocabulary to express their new theological insights. Thus they did not give their followers any tools to defend those insights against philosophical attack—or to create an alternative to the dualistic philosophy of scholasticism. As a result, the successors of Luther and Calvin went right back to teaching scholasticism in the Protestant universities, using Aristotle’s logic and metaphysics as the basis of their systems—and thus dualistic thinking continued to affect the Christian traditions... The problem with this secular/sacred dualism is that it does exactly what Plato did so many years ago: It identifies sin with some part of creation... Spirituality is defined as avoiding that part of creation, while spending as much time as possible in another part.¹⁴¹

The part of creation that is often implicated as evil is the female body.

“The sphinx figure posed the riddle of man’s existence that the Greek philosophers were unable to solve.”¹⁴² According to McDonald, this combination of animal and man represents the imprisonment of the natural life despite the soul’s longing to be free. “For the Greek, the image of the sphinx was replaced by that of the beautiful virgin of which the upper part was presented as lovely and fair, but the lower part a

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 78.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 80-81.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 82-83.

¹⁴² McDonald, 78.

veritable monster.”¹⁴³ This confusion regarding the female sex is expressed in Christian history through the stereotypes of the ideal of Mary and the infamous Eve.

Clark states, “The most fitting word with which to describe the Church Fathers’ attitude toward women is ambivalence. Women were God’s creation, His good gift to men—and the curse of the world.”¹⁴⁴ Tucker and Liefeld acknowledge that it is difficult to present a fair picture of their attitudes, because “there were changing perceptions among the Fathers, but apparent discrepancies within the works of the same person.”¹⁴⁵ As Irenaeus (130-195), bishop of Lyons from 185-195, argued against the Gnostics,¹⁴⁶ he emphasized the physicality of Jesus by drawing a parallel between Mary and Eve. As he did so, he lauded Mary and blamed Eve, “but he did so mildly compared to some of the later writings of the Fathers.”¹⁴⁷ The tendency was to vary between the extremes.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 79.

¹⁴⁴ Elizabeth Clark as cited in Ruth A. Tucker and Walter L. Liefeld, *Daughters of the Church: Women and Ministry from New Testament Times to the Present* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987), 90.

¹⁴⁵ Tucker and Liefeld, 90.

¹⁴⁶ One core doctrine of Gnosticism was that matter was evil; therefore, the body imprisoned the soul. On the topic of Gnosticism, Kassian writes, “Gnosticism came from the Greek *gnosis*, usually translated as ‘knowledge.’ As the Gnostics used the term it could be translated as ‘insight’ for *gnosis* involved an intricate process of knowing oneself. To know oneself at the deepest level was to simultaneously know God....Gnosticism was a cult that drew upon a multitude of religious and philosophical ideas circulating at the end of the first century. The Gnostics generally believed that God was not directly responsible for the creation of the material world. Rather, creation was the result of disobedience or malice toward the supreme spirit of God, and the material world that resulted was therefore evil. In the mechanics of creation, however, small sparks of divinity from the supreme God were captured in human beings. The Gnostics believed that a redeemer had been sent to release these captured sparks by giving people knowledge (*gnosis*) of the existence of God, and the true origins of the world. The Gnostics contradicted the events and interpretations of events offered by the writers of the biblical Gospels. Gnostics taught that self knowledge was knowledge of God—the self and the divine were identical. Second, their interpretation of Jesus spoke of illusion and enlightenment, not of sin and repentance....Gnostic literature was diverse, taken from Jewish, pagan, and Greek sources. Furthermore, it was often contradictory. Diversity of teaching is the very mark of the Gnostics. They allowed virtually any belief on the basis of one’s experiential *gnosis*. The early Church Fathers found this outrageous.” Mary Kassian, *The Feminist Mistake: The Radical Impact of Feminism on the Church and Culture* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005), 203-205.

For further discussion of Gnosticism, the reader is referred to Rudolph Bell, *Holy Anorexia* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), 72.

¹⁴⁷ Dates supplied by Cairn, 83. The quote regarding contrast of Eve and Mary is from Tucker and Liefeld, 95.

Clement of Alexandria (155-220) “spoke disparagingly of dresses that excite lust by revealing the female figure,” and believed marriage to be specifically for procreation. He asserted that marriage should be free of inordinate affection.¹⁴⁸

Tertullian’s writings from 196-212 reveal animosity toward women. Tertullian addressed *On the Apparel of Women* to his “best beloved sisters.” In this work he equated Christian women with Eve and admonished Christian women to dress humbly and walk in a mournful and repentant attitude,

‘in order that by every garb of penitence she might the more fully expiate that which she derives from Eve—the ignominy, I mean, of the first sin, and odium [attaching her as the cause] of perdition...In pains and in anxiety dost thou bear, woman; and toward thine husband [is] thy inclination, and he lords it over thee...And do you not know that you are [each] an Eve? The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age; the guilt must of necessity live too. You are the devil’s gateway; you are the unsealer of the [forbidden] tree; you are the first deserter of the divine law; you are she who persuaded him whom the devil was not valiant enough to attack. You destroyed so easily God’s image, man. On account of your desert [i.e., punishment], that is, death—even the Son of God had to die.’¹⁴⁹

According to Tucker and Liefield, Origen, the Alexandrian scholar who was prominent in the first part of the third century, spoke out even more strongly.¹⁵⁰

Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria around 247-264, stated that a woman is not to

‘approach the holy table or touch the body or blood of the Lord’ [i.e., in the sacrament]. The reason is that during her period she is not perfectly pure in soul and body. This restriction finds precedence in the legislation of Leviticus 15:19-24, where the woman’s periodic discharge is mentioned as one of the bodily emissions that result in defilement. Actually, the emission of males had the same result. Theoretically, a male could opt for celibacy, though that does not necessarily preclude an emission. But a woman has no way short of age to prevent her discharge.’¹⁵¹

Epiphanius (c.315-403) stated, “In very truth, women are a feeble race, untrustworthy

¹⁴⁸ Dates supplied by McDonald, 53. The quote from regarding Clement of Alexandria is from Tucker and Liefield, 96.

¹⁴⁹ Tertullian *On the Apparel of Women* in *Ibid.*, 103.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 106.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 111.

and of mediocre intelligence.”¹⁵² Ambrose (c. 340-397), bishop of Milan in the last quarter of the fourth century, believed that a woman’s purpose was to be a good helper and generate human nature.¹⁵³ He promoted celibacy for men and women and referred to the body as a “‘tattered garment’” for the soul.¹⁵⁴

Jerome (347-420) “warned widows and women who could remain pure not to eat meat (which indicates carnal desire) or lie in soft beds. Instead ‘let paleness and squalor be henceforth your jewels.’”¹⁵⁵ His contemporary and Ambrose’s most famous disciple, Augustine (354-430) developed fully the notion “that the Fall brought lust into the world and profaned the sex act, thereby relegating women to being sex objects for either good (procreative) or bad (Carnal) use.”¹⁵⁶ “What is the difference?” Augustine wrote to a friend, “whether it is in a wife or a mother, it is still Eve (the temptress) that we must beware of in any woman.”¹⁵⁷ It is clear that Augustine struggled to see the image of God in women “who all looked like temptresses to him, dragging him away from his focus on God.”¹⁵⁸ Influenced by the philosophy of his time, he wrote,

‘Thus a good Christian is found to love in one woman the creature of God whom he desires to be molded again and renewed, but to hate in her the corruptible and mortal sexual connection, i.e., to love in her what is human, to hate in her what pertains to a wife.’¹⁵⁹

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 116.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 123.

¹⁵⁴ Lee-Thorp and Hicks, 200.

¹⁵⁵ Ben Lowe, “Body Image and the Politics of Beauty,” in Callaghan, 23.

Lowe continues: “The commodification of women’s bodies, based on distrust and the assumption that women were in dire need of control because of their greater bent for sinning, formed another basis for the soul-body dualism that dominates the early Christian era...As such, the female body became like a piece of clay to be formed, shaped, and manipulated in an effort to save the weak female soul.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 23. Lowe notes that theologians following Augustine further depersonalized women and that women’s bodies were construed as inferior versions of men’s bodies as Aristotelian male/female dyads helped legitimize and regularize the inferior status of women.

¹⁵⁷ *The Letters of Augustine*, number 243 line 10 in *Augustine of Hippo*, ed. P. Brown (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), 63 as cited in Lee-Thorp and Hicks, 204.

¹⁵⁸ Lee-Thorp and Hicks, 204. The authors write that under Augustinian influence, western artists and theologians have consistently linked beauty to sexual temptation.

¹⁵⁹ *On the Sermon on the Mount* I.15.41 as cited in Tucker and Liefield, *Daughters of the Church*, p. 124.

John Chrysostom's (347-407) views are more extreme than Augustine's. He attributed Eve's deception to all women, because: "'the female is weak and vain, and here this is said of the whole sex. For he does not say, 'Eve was deceived, but 'the woman,' which is the common name of her sex, not her particular name.'"¹⁶⁰ He emphasized that the salvation of women was through childbearing. Although he held such views against women, he argued for one sexual standard for both male and female, an argument that not all Church Fathers supported.¹⁶¹

Kassian notes that women were in double jeopardy, thought to be both inferior to men and a symbol of carnality.¹⁶² Tucker and Liefeld note that, in general, women are considered by the Church Fathers to be unintelligent and dangerous, but the particular women with whom they shared close fellowship gained their respect; these women were thought of as transcending their sex.¹⁶³ "Women in general tended to be branded as sexually loose. Some writers were so preoccupied with women in their physical sexual role that it might be said that women were sometimes viewed as sex objects."¹⁶⁴

In 538 The Council of Orleans forbade married clerics to sleep with their wives... The Council of Tours in 567 blamed women for luring men into sin, comparing them to serpents who make themselves more alluring by shedding their skins. A synod convened at Auxerre at about the same time 'asserted that women by nature were impure.' That synod decreed that women could not receive the communion bread with their naked hand, or partake at all of the Eucharist during their menstrual period. It also 'denied women the right to sing in church, causing church choirs to rely on male eunuchs to sing in the high-pitched voices.'¹⁶⁵

Pope Gregory I responded to Augustine of Canterbury's query in 601 regarding whether a menstruating woman should be allowed to enter a church and partake of the

¹⁶⁰ *Homily 9 on 1 Timothy* as cited in Tucker and Liefeld, *Daughters of the Church*, 125.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 125-126.

¹⁶² Kassian, 206.

¹⁶³ Tucker and Liefeld, 127.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 127.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 133, 131.

sacrament by reminding Augustine of the woman with the hemorrhage who touched the hem of Jesus' garment. He concluded that women should not be prohibited from the sacrament. The matter was not settled by Gregory's pronouncement, however. Theodore, who was bishop of Canterbury several decades later, reverted to the practice of restricting women while menstruating and after pregnancy. Such restrictions marked the medieval period.¹⁶⁶

Thomas Aquinas, a thirteenth century theologian, did a considerable amount of writing on the subject of women, invariably in a derogatory manner:

Aquinas argued that a woman is dominated by her sexual appetite; whereas, a man is ruled by reason; and a woman is dependent on the man for everything in life, whereas he depends on her for procreation only. For these reasons and others women were unsuited for any meaningful role in the church or society. Indeed, women were beneath slaves in some respects: [According to Aquinas,]

'The woman is subject to the man, on account of the weakness of her nature, both of mind and of body...Man is the beginning of woman and her end, just as God is the beginning and ending of every creature... Woman is in subjection according to the law of nature, but a slave is not...Children ought to love their father more than their mother.'¹⁶⁷

According to Tucker and Liefeld,

One of the most paradoxical aspects of medieval thought in regard to women was the veneration given to the Virgin Mary, while ordinary women—particularly those outside aristocratic circles—were looked down on. Although women were often viewed as the source of evil, it was Mary who was the mediator between God and man, and it was she who, with divine authority, took on the devil, rebuking and even punishing him...But the perfection associated with Mary established an impossible standard for all others of her sex. She was larger than life—the ideal female and the perfect love, and other women were just women.¹⁶⁸

Over all, women fared better in the medieval church than outside of it. Historian Will Durant notes the clear anti-woman bias of both civil law and canon law but records that

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 131.

¹⁶⁷ Aquinas as cited in Will Durant, *The Age of Faith* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950), 826.

¹⁶⁸ Tucker and Liefeld, 168, 169.

civil law was more hostile. Durant records,

Both codes permitted wife-beating and it was quite a forward step when, in the thirteenth century, the 'Laws and Customs of Beauvais' bade a man beat his wife 'only in reason.' Civil law ruled that the word of women could not be admitted in court, 'because of their frailty'; it required only half as high a fine for an offense against a woman as for the same offense against a man.¹⁶⁹

Certain Renaissance humanists, such as Erasmus, held a higher view of women than did theologians of the Middle Ages, paving the way for the Reformers to follow.¹⁷⁰

Luther (1483-1586) held a progressive view of female education for the explicit purpose of enabling them to “draw the proper inferences and in the fear of God take their own place in the stream of human events.”¹⁷¹ Calvin (1509-1564), on the other hand, showed little interest in education of girls beyond the catechism.¹⁷² German reformers, taking their cue from Luther, encouraged city councils to provide public education for girls as well as boys, a far-sighted gesture for the 16th century. Nevertheless, Luther basically considered women to be inferior. In his commentary on Gen 1:27, he writes, “The woman certainly differs from the man, for she is weaker in body and intellect [than he]. Nevertheless, Eve was an excellent creature and equal to Adam so far as the divine image...(but) created inferior to the man both in honor and dignity”¹⁷³ He later rescinded and believed that “such inferiority came only after the Fall.”¹⁷⁴

Knox went far beyond Scripture in arguing that women were “weake, fraile, impatient, feeble, and foolishe,” in addition to being “unconstant, variable, cruell, and lacking the spirit of counsel and regiment.” In reflecting on creation, he reasoned that

¹⁶⁹ Durant, *Age of Faith*, 826.

¹⁷⁰ Tucker and Liefeld, 171.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 173.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 173.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 174.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 174.

““woman in her greatest perfection was made to serve and obey man.””¹⁷⁵

Interestingly,

Knox had close relationships with women and admitted his dependence on them in spiritual matters, especially Anne Locke, an outspoken Protestant woman in London... whom Knox praised for nourishing and confirming him in the faith, and he confided on one occasion that he was in desperate need of her spiritual counsel.¹⁷⁶

The Church fathers, Catholic clergy, and later, the Scholastics opened a Pandora's box when they embraced the ancient thinkers in regard to enmity between matter and spirit, and the dualism still persists. “Many Christians still retain a Hellenistic/patristic suspicion of the human body and consequently live quite awkwardly in their own.”¹⁷⁷ The unleashed evil has impacted women and men in terms of what it means to be embodied. It has gone a step further in the lives of women as the evil has been blamed upon their very bodies. This evil has wreaked havoc on human relationships to God and to each other.

The mask that the Christian Church has borrowed from classical Greek philosophy has been a tragedy. Tragedies are associated with the loss of relationship. The awkwardness of embodiment and the misunderstanding of difference as something to be despised rather than to be enjoyed have rendered the Church weak in its witness to the world. Could the historical attribution of evil and inferiority to the woman and the blame of theologians who put on the Greek mask contribute to the ambivalence western women seem to have about their bodies? Throughout the history of the west the tendency has been toward extremism in the interpretation of the female sex, masking her personhood. The loathing of Eve was associated with the lust of her body and the

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 177.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 178.

¹⁷⁷ Shores, 198.

veneration of Mary was linked to her virginity. Thus, the polarity of the images set before women in the west may have contributed to confusion of what it means to live in a female body. Many women have an unnamed sense of guilt regarding their body. This shame is not a new phenomenon. The contemporary context may differ in terms of the images of women being more literal than figurative, but there appears to have always been a struggle with equating the female person with an image, either of evil or of an unattainable ideal.

In contemporary culture the prevalent image of a woman is that of a consumer and the female body is an object to be consumed. The last few centuries have again embraced Epicureanism in science and philosophy, as demonstrated in Darwinian evolution and Freudian psychology.¹⁷⁸ The emphasis on the material world being the origin and sum of reality has posed new problems for Christians to combat, such as consumerism and the further relegation of women as objects of sexual gratification. The postmodern idea (which has its roots in the work of Greek philosopher Heraclitus) that language is limited and image is everything may deepen the impact of the images. It appears, then, that both ideas and images have consequences.

The history of western thought is that of the rebirth of various Greek philosophies. It is these philosophies that have permeated culture and stained the Bride. Scripture contains the answer to the riddles these philosophies pose.

¹⁷⁸ Pearcey, 391.

Chapter Two

Toward a Theology of the Body

T.R. Glover records a story about the scholar, Muretus, who in the year 1554 was ill, and the doctors proposed to try an operation upon him. It was of the nature of an operation, but so slight were the chances of success and so little was their interest in healing him, compared with their desire to see what the symptoms would be before death intervened, that it would be fairer to call it an experiment in vivisection. Not knowing who the patient was, or that he spoke Latin, one doctor said to the other, '*Fiat experimentum in corpore vili*' (Let the experiment be tried on this worthless Body). '*Vilem animam paellas,*' came a voice from the bed, '*pro qua Christus non designatus est mori?*' (Dost thou call that soul worthless for which Christ was content to die?)¹⁷⁹

The doctors made two mistakes: they treated the body as only an object and they declared it worthless. But the will of the one who inhabited the body asserted the oneness of body and soul in earthly experience and the dignity bestowed upon it by God at creation as well as the value ascribed to it in the bodily and spiritual death and resurrection of Christ. Muretus knew the value of his body and soul because he knew the Source of his worth. Can the Christian church, in its practice, be put in the category with the doctors or with the patient? Has the church, although stating its differences from the world, proclaimed any message that is distinct from the messages of the culture concerning the body? Has the church communicated a theology of the body that is true to God's Holy Scripture? Or has the church been influenced by the words and ways of men apart from Christ? The church is called to present the truth in love. If the church is ignoring or vilifying the body, presenting only the value of the soul, it is presenting half-truth and missing the opportunity to minister in meaningful ways.

¹⁷⁹ T.R. Glover, *Jesus and the Experience of Men* (London: S.C.M. Press, Ltd., 1921), 226 as cited in Cairn, 288.

According to Barger,

Two millennia of church history have included otherworld fixations, misogynistic eruptions, and adoptions of Greek dualism with its denial of the significance of the embodied life. Church history has resulted in what is often a disembodied theology. Such a theology is composed of cosmic legal transactions more interested in the afterlife than in this life, more interested in our souls than in our bodies. This is a theology of transcendent ideals stripped of every vestige of blood, sweat, or tears. It is an “enlightenment” theology where truth is presented as a series of philosophical proofs while inadvertently forgetting that Jesus is the Truth *made flesh*.¹⁸⁰

In reference to the question “What’s wrong with our world?” a Christian worldview rejects any answer that sees physical bodies or the physical world as inherently evil.¹⁸¹

Old Testament and New Testament concepts of man in God’s image and the implied service of God within that image do not embrace platonic body-soul dualism or flesh-spiritual dualism. The *nephesh*, soul, and *basar*, flesh,

stand for two aspects of the whole person and not two opposing entities. For example, in Psalm 63:1 the *nephesh* thirsts for God, while the *basar* yearns for Him; that is, soul and body are portrayed as unified in deeply desiring the Lord.¹⁸²

Hebrew thought and practice held to one God who created man with one nature, a nature expressed with body and spirit. “Since God created body and soul, neither of the two could be of themselves wholly evil or wholly independent of each other.”¹⁸³

The general impression from the biblical account is that man’s nature is two-fold, however, there is no sharp dualism in the Old Testament or New Testament. According to Cairn, “The Hebrew did not distinguish between body and spirit as does western thought, and the body for him was, so to speak, a sacrament of the spirit.”¹⁸⁴ He continues, “Hebrew psychology does not divide up man’s nature into mutually

¹⁸⁰ Barger, 182.

¹⁸¹ Van Leeuwen, 41.

¹⁸² N. Bratsiotis, *basar*, in *The Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, general eds. Johannes Botterweck and Helmar Ringrenn (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974), 326.

¹⁸³ D. Whitely, *The Theology of Saint Paul* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964) as cited in Shores, 37.

¹⁸⁴ Cairn, 30.

exclusive parts.”¹⁸⁵ And concludes, “In Hebrew thought one cannot speak of dualism, but of a twofold nature, in which the links between spirit and body are extremely intimate. The body is neither the tomb of the spirit as idealism is apt to regard it, nor as the man himself, as materialists claim.”¹⁸⁶

Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures affirm God’s concern for the physical dimension of His people and all of humanity. God’s care for the body is consistently evident throughout the biblical revelation. From Genesis through Revelation God’s deliberate and intimate involvement in the physical and spiritual facets of man commends the dignity of His human creation.¹⁸⁷ Paulsell argues, “It is possible to discover in Scripture the contours of a distinctively Christian practice of honoring the body that has wisdom to offer our culture.”¹⁸⁸ However,

Historically there has been a recurring pull toward Gnosticism among Christians—that is, a tendency to regard the material world as antithetical to an ideally disembodied spiritual existence. In its extreme form, this attitude downplays both the created goodness of the body and the degree to which that goodness is compromised by sin. That is why Gnostic sexual ethics vacillate between asceticism and license: if the body is nothing but a trap for the spirit, then it should be either disciplined into complete submission or, conversely, allowed to do whatever its whims dictate.¹⁸⁹

The Pauline Epistles: *Sarx*

Why do Christians struggle with embodiment? Could one reason be the misinterpretation of the Pauline writings? “To recognize that we are not disembodied souls, and that St. Paul does not believe that we are, is of utmost importance for our Christian understanding of what it means to be human.”¹⁹⁰ Biblical scholars

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁸⁷ Paul K. Jewett and Marguerite Shuster, *Who We Are: Our Dignity As Human: A Neo-Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 28.

¹⁸⁸ Stephanie Paulsell, *Honoring the Body: Meditations on a Christian Practice* (New York: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 6.

¹⁸⁹ Van Leeuwen, 145.

have done a great deal to liberate the student from a Gnostic reading of Paul's ideas about the flesh. According to Schweizer,

The New Testament word translated flesh is *sarx*. In classical Greek, it originally denoted the soft tissue of the body; through metonymy the term came in classical Greek to stand for the body as a whole, and, later, for the corruptible part of man (that which decays at death) in opposition to the incorruptible component, the psyche, which is released at death.¹⁹¹

Although Paul lived in a dualistic Hellenic culture in which the *sarx* had become vilified as the enemy of the soul, he held to the Hebrew *basar* and *nephesh* as two aspects of the whole person, not two opposing entities. Paul shared the Hebrew belief that human being is "flesh animated by soul, the whole conceived as psycho-physical unity."¹⁹²

According to Baumgartel as cited in Shores, "By far the most important word underlying *sarx* in the LXX is the Hebrew *basar* which *sarx* translates 273 times."¹⁹³

Bratsiotis writes,

The fact that in the Old Testament *basar* refers most often to the parts of man that are vulnerable to sickness, injury and death communicates an emphasis in the Old Testament on man's creatureliness, his absolute dependence on God, his earthly nature, and his weakness, inadequacy, and transitoriness denotes man's frailty and mortality in contrast with God.¹⁹⁴

According to Shores, the Old Testament concepts of *basar* deeply inform *sarx* as it is carried over into the New Testament.¹⁹⁵

The most frequent uses of *sarx* in the New Testament are Pauline. Of the ninety-one times the designation 'flesh' (*sarx*) occurs in the Pauline writings, fifty-six of these have a specific physical connotation.¹⁹⁶ *Sarx* can denote the physical part of man as in II

¹⁹⁰ Marianne H. Micks, *Our Search for Identity: Humanity in the Image of God* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 64.

¹⁹¹ Schweizer, *sarx*, in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), 99.

¹⁹² J.A.T. Robinson as cited in Micks, 67.

¹⁹³ Shores, 16.

¹⁹⁴ Bratsiotis, *basar*, in Botterweck and Ringrenn, 328.

¹⁹⁵ Shores, 19.

Corinthians 4:11.¹⁹⁷ It can denote a bodily or physical condition as in Galatians 4:13.¹⁹⁸

It is important to note that Paul's perception of the physical aspect is not akin to Plato's:

Sarx in the New Testament is not the flesh of Plato's negative perspective wherein it is regarded as a troublesome sheath to be shucked off so that the soul, no longer shackled by the desires of the *sarx*, can move upward toward God (not, of course, the God of Scripture). Rather *sarx* is the physical aspect of man that can find its right mode of existence only before God who created it and sustains it. As such, *sarx* is united with psyche in twofold unity that is made for God and drawn to Him. However, if *sarx* loses this perspective and turns toward itself in foolish reliance, a breach of faith with God has occurred, a breach toward which He will not remain indifferent.¹⁹⁹

Jeremiah 17:5 states, "Cursed is the man who makes his flesh his strength and whose heart turns away from the Lord." In its physical sense, then, *sarx* is neutral.

According to McDonald, the remaining thirty-five times that Paul uses the term 'flesh' a physical reference is hardly possible. The majority of instances in which the term 'flesh' is not referring to the physical are found in the seventh and eighth chapters of Romans and the fifth chapter of Galatians "and these have a distinctly moral or ethical meaning."²⁰⁰ Galatians 5:16 contrasts *pneuma* and *sarx* and portrays the flesh "as an opportunist, an entity insistently pressing for expression, an inward principle that is in complete opposition to the Spirit."²⁰¹ *Kata sarka* means "according to the flesh, the mindset that operates in exclusion of God's perspective."²⁰² According to Barclay, *sarx* refers to a human point of view in Romans 1:3 or a judgment according to human standards as in I Corinthians 1:26.²⁰³ Thus, considered ethically, the flesh is depicted as

¹⁹⁶ McDonald, 19.

¹⁹⁷ "For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh" (II Corinthians 4:11).

¹⁹⁸ "But you know that it was because of a bodily illness that I preached to you the first time" (Galatians 4:13).

¹⁹⁹ Shores, 21.

²⁰⁰ McDonald, 19.

²⁰¹ Shores, 24-25. "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16).

²⁰² *Ibid.*, 21.

“permanently antagonistic to the spirit and as fit only to be suppressed and put to death as described in Romans 8:13.”²⁰⁴ Thus, in the ethical sense, *sarx* describes rebelliously turning away from God. Martin Luther quotes Sirach in his *Treatise on Christian Liberty*, “The beginning of all sin is to depart from God and not trust Him.”²⁰⁵ Shores concludes, “Turning from God in favor of self-sufficiency is the essence of sin in Scripture;” it is enmity toward God.²⁰⁶

McDonald agrees,

By definition the ‘flesh’ is the earthly part of man and in its secondary sense refers to man’s lower nature as the seat of all lusts and desires. (Ephesians 2:3) To ‘set the mind on the flesh’ and ‘live according to the flesh’ means ‘death’ (cf. Romans 8: 6, 12) To live in flesh is to give rein to sinful passion (Romans 7:5) of which a dreadful catalogue of its outworking is given in Galatians 5:19-21. Yet Paul does not limit the term flesh to one aspect of man’s being; it denotes the whole personality. While then *sarx*, in its physical contexts, means total human nature conditioned by the body, in its moral or ethical connotation it refers to total human nature conditioned by the Fall. The flesh is, certainly, human nature in its weakness and frailty,... For the apostle sees flesh as more than earthly-transitory. He views it as positively sinful and hostile to God.²⁰⁷

According to McDonald, Paul never attributes sin’s origin to the body itself:

In Romans 8:11 Paul speaks about the quickening of the mortal body. In the context he is dealing specifically with the body as such, and this would be inconsistent with

²⁰³ William Barclay, *Flesh and Spirit: An Examination of Galatians* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1962). “Concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh” Romans 1:3. “For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble” (I Corinthians 1:26).

²⁰⁴ Shores, 26. “For if you were living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live” (Romans 8:13).

²⁰⁵ Martin Luther quoting Sirach as cited in Shores, 26.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 36.

²⁰⁷ McDonald, 19. “Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest” (Ephesians 2:3). “For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace” (Romans 8:6). “So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh” (Romans 8:12). “For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death” (Romans 7:5). “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:19-21).

the view that it is essentially evil. He insists, too, on the reality and integrity of Christ's human nature, and argues at the same time for His sinlessness; a fact which suggests that he could hardly conceive the flesh as intrinsically sinful. It may, therefore be affirmed categorically that of the notion of the inherent evil of matter which was characteristically Gnostic doctrine, there is not a trace in Paul.²⁰⁸

McDonald continues:

However, while Paul does not regard the flesh as sinful in itself, he does view it as that element of man's being which gives sin its opportunity to exert a destructive influence on the whole man. It provides sin with a basis from which to operate. Upon the flesh sin readily impinges to permeate the human life and issues in those evil deeds referred to as 'the works of the flesh' (Galatians 5:19, cf. v. 16; II Corinthians 10:2f.; Galatians 5:17, Ephesians 2:3). What is of the flesh stands in opposition to God (Romans 8:8) and finds contentment in mere outward religious observances (Colossians 2:23).²⁰⁹

This outward aspect, the part of man concerned with outward appearances instead of inner transformation, the performing part of man, is not the body but the misdirected soul, the mind set on serving two masters, the will that succumbs to pleasing man. This suggestion of dualism is not the platonic type but simply the contrast between the exterior and the interior (Ephesians 6:6, Philippians 1:27, Colossians 3:23).²¹⁰

Soma

There are 89 occurrences of the word for 'body' in the Pauline epistles, but of these sixty-six have the sense of the human organism, either living or dead. On fifteen

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 20. "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you" (Romans 8:11).

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 20. "But I say, walk by the Spirit and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please" (Galatians 5:16-17). "I ask that when I am present I need not be bold with the confidence with which I propose to be courageous against some who regard us as if we walked according to the flesh" (II Corinthians 10:2). "Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest" (Ephesians 2:3). "And those who are in the flesh cannot please God" Romans 8:8. "These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement, and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence" (Colossians 2:23).

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 23. "Not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Ephesians 6:6). "Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Philippians 1:27). "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men (Colossians 3:23).

occasions it designates the ‘mystical body of Christ.’ It is used once with the sense of substance (RSV) or ‘solid reality’ (NEB) in contrast with a shadow. The plural form in I Corinthians 6:15 would seem to refer to individuals in the totality of their being... By the expression ‘body of flesh’ in Colossians 2:11, Paul evidently means a body given over to the carnal instincts of the flesh.²¹¹

The term *soma* meaning “body” and *psyche* meaning “soul” “seem to represent two aspects of the human person, the material and the immaterial. Paul’s anthropology presents man as a unity of being with a material and spiritual sense. The material of the body is not evil, but the sinful nature that elevates sensual desires above the desire for God is evil. *Soma* is not the equivalent of *sarx* and in many cases stands in stark contrast. “The body can become the instrument of God; the flesh cannot. The body can be purified and even glorified; the flesh must be eliminated and eradicated.”²¹² “The fact that the body can become a temple of God’s Spirit (I Corinthians 6:13,19-20; Romans 6:13; 12:1) is decisive against any identification of sin with the body.”²¹³

Thus, what may seem to be dualism in Paul’s letters regarding his longing for eternity is not the dualism of the Greek influence (II Corinthians 5:1-9). Rather, “It is the awareness of the temporary separation between body and soul that occurs between death and the acquisition of the resurrection body”(I Corinthians 15:44, Philippians 3:20-21).²¹⁴

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, 23. “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be!” (I Corinthians 6:15). “And in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ” (Colossians 2:11).

²¹² Shores, 25.

²¹³ McDonald, 20. “Food is for the stomach, and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both of them. Yet the body is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body (I Corinthians 6:13). “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body” (I Corinthians 6:19-20). “And do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God (Romans 6:13). “Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship (Romans 12:1).

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 31. “It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body (I Corinthians 15:44). “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the

Paul never calls evil what God called good:

He sees the body as under the influence of sin (Romans 6:6) and subject to death (Romans 7:24). He does not teach that sin and death are inherent properties of it. Neither belongs to the body as such; they are aliens come in to occupy a foreign territory.²¹⁵

For Paul, body and soul belong fundamentally together:

On the basis of Christ's Resurrection when after three days His Spirit, dismissed on Golgotha's tree, and His body, laid in Joseph of Arimathea's new tomb coalesced again, Paul secured the foundation of the apostolic faith in the resurrection of the body (cf. I Corinthians 15, Romans 8:18, Philippians 3:21).²¹⁶

Shores states, "The body, then, is exonerated of the idea that it is locked in a permanent dualism with the spirit. In fact, body and spirit will be eternally reunited in the resurrection, and the body will thus be honored forever" I Corinthians 15:42-45).²¹⁷ It is not the body that Paul is at war with but the sin nature and its impact on the body and the soul.

The Image of God Impressed Upon and Within the Christian

Shores writes, "When image and flesh are examined together, man is an inherently conflicted creature."²¹⁸ Brunner states that man is "in a contradiction from which he cannot escape through His own resources."²¹⁹

Although the distorting results of the mankind's rebellion against God

body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself" (Philippians 3:20-21).

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 23. "Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin (Romans 6:6). "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24).

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 23. "For I consider the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us (Romans 8:18). Please refer to footnote 214 for Philippians 3:21

²¹⁷ Shores, 25. "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So also it is written, 'The first man, Adam, became a living soul.' The last Adam became a life-giving spirit (I Corinthians 15:42-45).

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

²¹⁹ Emil Brunner, *I and Thou* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p.114.

do not negate the goodness of creation or the worth and dignity of all who inhabit it. Still, the fallout of the fall, if we may call it that, is all-pervasive. The entire material world, Paul tells us in a graphic mix of metaphors, ‘groans in labor pains’ and is trapped in ‘bondage to decay’ as a result of it (Romans 8:19-23). And human relations are no less fractured, with sin and injustice marring actions between generations, classes, nations, and –of course—the sexes. But to the question, ‘What’s the solution?’ The biblical drama pointedly rejects the partial answers humans keep trying to impose. We are not to put our trust in princes (or princesses for that matter—Ps. 146:2-3) nor in economists, psychotherapists, scientists, or political leaders. For despite the good that all these are able to accomplish in their limited spheres of authority, none are able to deal with the deepest root of the problem. For that we need outside help.²²⁰

God provides the solution in Jesus Christ.²²¹ God is able to deal with the evil

unleashed by human rebellion through His involvement with His creation through the

work of His Son and His Spirit. Paul makes it clear that God’s plan is that His people not

remain conflicted creatures; His people are to contain “treasure in earthen vessels” (II

Corinthians 4:7).²²² His plan is that Christians become new creations in Christ Jesus,

reflecting and being conformed to the image human beings were designed to mirror.²²³

The resolution of the story of man “is that the image of God is both exemplified by Christ

²²⁰ Van Leeuwen, 146. “For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body” (Romans 8:19-23). “I will sing praises to my God while I have my being. Do not trust in princes, in mortal man, in whom there is no salvation” (Psalm 146:2-3).

²²¹ II Corinthians 4:4, Colossians 1:15, and Hebrews 1:3 refer to Jesus as the image of God. Brand and Yancey write, “Jesus Christ came to earth to offer us an image in the purest sense of the word: a precise reflection of what the Father is like, in bodily form.” “In whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (II Corinthians 4:4). “He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation” (Colossians 1:15). “And the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of the sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Hebrews 1:3).

Paul Brand and Philip Yancey, *In His Image* (Grand Rapids: MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984).

²²² “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves” (II Corinthians 4:7).

²²³ Brand and Yancey in *In His Image*, (pp. 19-23), Hubach (2006) in *Identity Crisis: Centrality of the Image of God to Human Relationships* (compact disc), Lee-Thorp and Hicks (1997) in *Why Beauty Matters*, (pp. 89-92) and Welch (1997) in *When People Are Big and God Is Small* (pp. 153-157) offer insightful discussions of the *imago Dei*.

and restored through Christ.”²²⁴

McDonald states,

In two passages Paul suggests that the image to which believers will be conformed is one with the image in which man was originally created. In both passages, Colossians 3:10 and Ephesians 4:24, the primary reference is no doubt to the renewal which takes place in the Christian experience of the new birth. Both statements re-echo the words of man’s first creation in Genesis 1:27. Having put on the new nature the believer ‘is being constantly renewed in the image of its Creator and brought to know God’ (Colossians 3:10NEB). The new man which the believer becomes endued is ‘created in righteousness and true holiness’ (Ephesians 4:24). The second creation, it is suggested, follows the pattern of the first... To know God in righteousness and holiness is truly to know Him in the relationship of son to Father. Such was the relationship lost; and such is the relationship to which man is restored in Christ.²²⁵

According to Shores,

The believer, then, in virtue of his being united to Christ is both eternally free from condemnation and immediately placed into a life-giving, life-sustaining fellowship with God. The new creation is immediate (II Corinthians 5:17 and progressive (ongoing) (II Corinthians 3:18). Although the struggle against sin must continue the conflict is no longer driven by the conscience accusing man but instead by the Savior who is calling him to a richer life. It is no longer a struggle for self-righteousness but it is a response to His righteousness. It is a dependent walk with God.²²⁶

Paul refers to the hope of glory in the life of the Christian as the power of Christ within (Colossians 1:27).²²⁷ The reality that the new creation can occur in the body, that Christ enters the Christian through the Holy Spirit, should rid the Christian of the historical mindset that the body is something to be despised. The body is an instrument, not an opponent.

When approached by the Pharisees, ardent nationalists who were opposed to the

²²⁴ Shores, p. 12.

²²⁵ McDonald, 16. “And have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him” (Galatians 3:10). ““And put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth” (Ephesians 4:24).

²²⁶ Shores, 40. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold new things have come (II Corinthians 5:17). “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit” (II Corinthians 3:18).

²²⁷ “To whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27).

Roman rule, and the Herodians, who supported the Roman rule of the Herods, with a question about whether or not He thought it permissible to pay the poll-tax to Caesar, Jesus asked to see the coin. He looked at the denarius, the usual daily wage, and asked, “‘Whose likeness and inscription is this?’ They said to Him, ‘Caesar’s.’ ‘Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things that are God’s’” (Matthew 22:15-21; cf. Mark 12:13-17 and Luke 20:19-26). According to McDonald, “The unspoken argument surely is: Give the taxes that are his due. But the image that is printed on you is not Caesar’s but God’s; therefore you yourselves belong to God.”²²⁸ He states, “This is quite clearly the OT use of the term in the mouth of Christ Himself.”²²⁹ Jesus makes it clear that people are issued by God, made in His likeness and with His inscription. In response His people are to render the whole of their lives to God, who minted them.

How do Christians live (in their bodies) in the light of that likeness? What commandments are Christians to follow that reveal their resemblance? To these questions comes the response of Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 as Jesus answered in Matthew 22:35-40 and Mark 12:28-34 and to which the lawyer responded in Luke 10:25-28.²³⁰ Jesus affirmed the lawyer’s answer, “Do this and you will live” (Luke 10:28). “So you are to keep My statutes and My judgments, by which a man may live if he does them; I am the Lord” (Leviticus 18:5). Total devotion of the heart, mind, soul, and strength is demanded by God for the good of His creation.

²²⁸ McDonald, 30.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 38. He expounds on this thought on page 38, “While the Old Testament conception of the image is thus to be found in the New Testament, it is also fair to say that thought the New Testament sense is not to be found in so many words in the Old Testament, yet the achievement and likeness of God in His people is also the goal of Old Testament revelation.”

²³⁰ “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might” (Deuteronomy 6:5). “You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord” (Leviticus 19:18).

Human identity and potential can be realized only in Christ. Jesus gives abundant life (John 10:10).²³¹ Jesus claims, “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me” (John 14:6). He is the only way by which a person can rightly relate to the Father and to others. It is possible to become a new creation by His activity, restoring the image of God from within the one who turns to Him in trust. He is able to make all things new (Revelation 21:5).²³² In Him the old things pass away and the new arrives (II Corinthians 5:17).²³³

The Temple

Jesus is dedicated to restoration. He is jealous for God’s house, which is now, for the Christian, not a house made with human hands, but a human body made with God’s hands.²³⁴ Jesus instructed His parents that He was to be in His Father’s house doing His Father’s business (Luke 2:49), but He was opposed to some of the practices taking place within it (John 2:16).²³⁵ The cleansing of the temple is recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke toward the end of Jesus’ ministry:

And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves. And He said to them, ‘It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer’; [referring to Isaiah 56:7] but you have made it a robbers’ den” (Matthew 21:12-13).

“The buying and selling took place in the outer court of the Gentiles, the only part of the

²³¹ “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10).

²³² “And He who sits on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’ And He said, ‘Write, for these words are faithful and true’” (Revelation 21:5).

²³³ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” (II Corinthians 5:17).

²³⁴ In the history of Israel, the temple was the central place of worship, built with specific instructions from God and rebuilt by those returning from Babylon and then by Herod. The progression of worship from the temple in Jerusalem to the Christian’s body becoming the temple is recorded on the following pages.

²³⁵ “And He said to them, ‘Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father’s house?’” (Luke 2:49). “And to those who were selling the doves He said, ‘Take these things away; stop making My Father’s house a place of business’” (John 2:16).

temple in which Gentiles could worship God and gather for prayer.”²³⁶

By allowing the outer courts of the temple to become a marketplace, the Jewish Religious leaders were interfering with God’s provision for the Gentiles. The temple was ‘a robbers’ den’ not only because they were taking financial advantage of the people, selling animals for sacrifice at unfair prices, but because they robbed the temple of its sanctity.²³⁷

The Gospel of Mark records that “He would not permit anyone to carry merchandise through the temple” (Mark 11:16).

John records a temple cleansing at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. Two explanations for his earlier inclusion are possible: there were two cleansings, one at the beginning and one at the end, or there was only one cleansing which took place during the Passion Week but which John placed at the beginning of his account for theological reasons.²³⁸

In John 2:16 Jesus commands the sellers,

‘Take these things away; stop making My Father’s house a place of business.’ [John 2:17 references Psalm 69: 9], His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘Zeal for Your house will consume Me.’ The Jews then said to Him, ‘What sign do You show us as Your authority for doing these things?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’ The Jews then said, ‘It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?’ But He was speaking of the temple of His body. So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken (John 18-22).

Jesus referred to His body as the temple. Since there is no more need for earthly priests or sacrifices (Hebrews 9:1-10:25) and since the Spirit fills and indwells believers, the body of the Christian is now His temple (I Corinthians 6:19-20).²³⁹ John the Baptist said, “I baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit” (Mark 1:8;

²³⁶ NAS Study Bible, p. 1398 “Pilgrims coming to the Passover Feast needed animals that met the ritual requirements for sacrifice, and the vendors set up their animal pens and money tables in the court of the Gentiles. Pilgrims needed their money changed into the local currency because the annual temple tax had to be paid in that currency. Also, the Mishnah required Tyrian currency for some offerings. Doves were required for the purification of women (Leviticus 12:6; Luke 2:22-24), the cleansing of those with certain skin diseases (Leviticus 14:22), and other purposes (Leviticus 15:14, 29). They were also the usual offering of the poor (Leviticus 5:7).”

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.1442.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1398.

²³⁹ The reader is referred to footnote 213 to read I Corinthians 6:19-20.

cf. Matthew 3:11, Luke 3:16, John 1:33, Acts 1:5, Acts 11:16). Jesus tells His followers, “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8; cf. Luke 24:49). The promised Spirit filled the followers of Jesus (Acts 2:4).²⁴⁰ Peter instructed those who wanted to follow, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). “For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself” (Acts 2:39). Thus, Paul refers to individual believers, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body” (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

Paul makes it clear that the body of an individual believer is the dwelling place of God. He also emphasizes that believers have a choice as to whether or not they will glorify God. He urges the honor of God in the body, “And do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God” (Romans 6:13). He continues, “Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness” (Romans 6:16). “For as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now you present your members as slaves to righteousness,

²⁴⁰ “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit was giving utterance” (Acts 2:4).

resulting in sanctification” (Romans 6:19). He declares the dignity of the human body; it is intended for the Lord. “Yet the body is not for immortality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body” (I Corinthians 6:13). Paul denies that what one does with one’s body is not important: “Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, ‘I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God and they shall be My people’” (II Corinthians 6:16). A fitting response is then, “Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (I Corinthians 10:31).

Paul pleads, “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship” (Romans 12:1). Paul’s writings emphasize the redemption of the whole person. It is clear here that the body-soul unity which is in Paul’s Hebraic mindset is God’s intent for worship. He created a multi-dimensional being with every dimension ideally presented in worship. Presenting physical bodies to God is spiritual service. “Living sacrifice” contrasts the death required for animal sacrifice, the death which Christ endured to purchase life, and implies the integral part the body plays in the new life occupied by the Holy Spirit.

Paul refers to the body as a vessel for truth, “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves” (II Corinthians 4:7). Christians have the constant companionship of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Believers contain the gospel of Christ and the indwelling Holy Spirit. Rightly handling the truth, the Christian “will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work” (II Timothy 2:21).

The truth of Christ is able to set free the one who will obey Him. Bonhoeffer writes, “In the language of the Bible, freedom is not something man has for himself but something he has for others.”²⁴¹ The Christian is not just free from sin and death, but free for service. Ephesians 2:10 states that the Christian is created in Christ Jesus for good works.²⁴² The body is to be a place from which worship overflows into service.

At the end of earthly service, those who follow Christ, like all people, will die a physical death. But God assures Christians that He will restore their bodies in a future resurrection. Romans 8:19-23 mentions that all of creation groans as it is in bondage to decay until it is liberated by God. But Christians die assured that their bodies will be restored to them in a future resurrection. I Corinthians 6:14 states, “Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power.” The triumphant resurrection is also recorded in I Corinthians 15:51-53, II Corinthians 4:14, Philippians 3:20-21, and I Thessalonians 4:14.²⁴³ And I Thessalonians 5:23 emphasizes wholeness, “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Shores writes, “The doctrine of the resurrection of the body establishes powerfully God’s determination to honor His creature completely.”²⁴⁴

Jesus not only commands with His words and actions the honor of the body, He also

²⁴¹ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), 37.

²⁴² “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10).

²⁴³ “Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed” (I Corinthians 15:51-53). “Knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and will present us with you” (II Corinthians 4:14). “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Philippians 3:20-21). Who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.” “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus” (I Thessalonians 4:14).

²⁴⁴ Shores, 198.

identifies Himself with its treatment. He accosts Saul, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” (Acts 9:4) When the bodies of His followers are persecuted, He is persecuted. When the bodies that He created are provided for with honor, He is honored, “Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it unto Me” (Matthew 25:40). James writes,

If a brother or sister is without clothing or in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,’ and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that (James 2:15-16)?

Honoring the body opens up opportunities to touch the soul. The intricate connection between soul and body is such that when either is cared for, it affects both. Doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God (Micah 6:8) will involve caring for the body.²⁴⁵ But one can only honor what he values.

Ironically, the exaltation of the material over the immaterial in western culture has resulted in devaluation of the dignity of both. Jesus angrily casts out of the temple those who are making it a marketplace. Since the believer’s body is the temple of God, it is not in accord with Scripture for it to be used as a marketplace (or viewed as merchandise in a marketplace). Yet Christians have allowed other ideologies and philosophies to wreak havoc on the Biblical perspective of the body. And the result has been a “dualistic failure to appreciate the body’s place in God’s plan that only confuses the individual who either lives apologetically in his body or, at the other extreme, obsesses about its every function.”²⁴⁶ This negative connotation of the body has more than just intrapersonal implications. It affects interpersonal relationships. An unbiblical view of the body also impacts the willingness to care for another body in need. If one’s body is devalued, one

²⁴⁵ “He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8).

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 198.

is likely to not esteem another person's body or care for his or her need. If one obsesses about one's body, than it is unlikely that he will be responsive to another person's need.

Scripture is clear about the goodness of the body but culture is not clear. If Christians do not shed the light of God's truth about the body, then more bodies will suffer and fewer souls will be touched with His love. Scripture has never stated that body and soul are in conflict; it has stated that the sin nature struggles with both. "The biblical witness to the essential unity and wholeness of the personal self is antithetical to a dualism that posits an evil body and a good soul."²⁴⁷ At the same time, "Those who would frame a Christian and biblical anthropology must speak of the human subject not only in terms of a unity of the personal self but also in terms of a distinction between soul and body."²⁴⁸ Although the personal self is not apart from the body as in Idealism, it cannot be equated with the body as in Materialism. To be a person is to be a soul in and with a body. "Though we are given our humanity in a body, our body is not the center and focal point of that humanity."²⁴⁹ The worship of God is central.

That God created humanity to have a body and soul before sin entered into human existence; that the body and soul are inseparable until death and in eternity are to be reunited; that they are distinct yet united in individual identity; that Jesus became incarnate; that the body is now His temple, and in Christ, can be an offering, a living sacrifice in the hands of the perfect Priest; that it will be raised and experience no more death, mourning, crying, or pain (Revelation 21:4) means that as Christians reverence the body they honor its Creator.²⁵⁰ When human beings idolize the body, they break God's

²⁴⁷ Jewitt and Shuster, 35.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 36.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 40.

²⁵⁰ "And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away" (Revelation 21:12).

commandments and separate themselves from His good intentions.²⁵¹ The body is certainly not intended to be a project; it is intended to be a place of worship. It provides a place for the created to come to know the Creator and to learn to love people made in His image.

Christians look to Christ as their example and find that He expressed concern for the health of the whole person. He did not address the spirit and ignore the body, He cared for the body, and in so doing, implored the spirit. John writes to Gaius, “I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers” (III John 1:2). He asks God to bless Gaius with both physical and spiritual health. Both are desirable. John’s hope for his friend is a godly one. “In the Lord’s intention, body and soul are not in a war.”²⁵²

The Scriptures describe prosperity as being in the presence of God, enjoying His company by trusting His Son, and responding to the gift of salvation by living a life of obedience. David in Psalm 16:11 exclaims, “In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.” Jesus states, “Just as the Father has loved Me, I have loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. These things have I spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full” (John 15: 9-11). This prospering is possible in any condition of the body, for “to be healthy is to be genuine.”²⁵³ It can be well with the soul despite an illness of the body, but

²⁵¹ God commands in Exodus 20:3-4 “You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourselves an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.” In Romans 1:22-25 Paul writes, “Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. Therefore, God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.” (NAS)

²⁵² Jewitt and Shuster, 49.

neither the soul nor the body will be well if either of these aspects of humanity dishonors God.

The Christian's perception of what it means to live in the body will affect the life lived in that body because beliefs affect behavior: "what goes into the mind comes out in a life."²⁵⁴ If Christians will see the body through God's perspective, they may be more likely to honor the body.²⁵⁵ And in so treating the body with dignity in doctrine and in practice the Body of Christ will be distinct from the surrounding culture and Christ will be glorified. When Christians look to God's Word as the authority, God will enable them to see not only

the wisdom of God in that which appears foolish to the world but also the beauty of God in that which appears unlovely to the world. In this experience of redeeming grace, [Christians] come to realize that there is beauty in the mind of God that cannot be found in the city of Athens.²⁵⁶

The extremes of the disembodied ideal or the soulless matter that the philosophers of Athens conceived is certainly not found in the mind of God as revealed in Scripture.

God distinguishes Himself from humanity, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are my ways your ways. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:3). Yet God invites His people, "Come now, and let us reason together" (Isaiah 1:18). God never asked His people to reason apart from His revelation. He said that His people could reason with

²⁵³ Wise, 189.

²⁵⁴ Christian Booksellers Association, accessed 12 December 2004 from <http://www.cba.com>.

²⁵⁵ Barna's research indicates that "Christians who have a biblical worldview are nine times more likely than all other people to avoid adult-only material on the Internet: four times more likely than other believers to boycott objectionable companies or products...and twice as likely as other adults to volunteer to time to help needy people...and several times less likely to use tobacco products." In Barna, *Think Like Jesus*, 24. For further research regarding the impact of beliefs on health, the reader is referred to: Harold G. Koenig, *Is Religion Good for Your Health: The Effects of Religion on Physical and Mental Health* (New York: The Haworth Pastoral Press, 1997).

²⁵⁶ Jewitt and Shuster, 98.

Him: together; apart from Him there is no logic (Job 28:12-13, Psalm 111:10, Proverbs 9:10, John 1:1).²⁵⁷ Truth is from God alone. God's people who are vessels in His image can become temples of His Spirit and Truth through faith in Christ alone. Then, what seems unreasonable to humans: that scarlet sins shall be white as snow, that crimson red stains can be like wool, (Isaiah 1:18) that robes washed in blood can become pure white (Revelation 7:14, 22:14)—is more real than all the fantasies by which people are tempted to live.²⁵⁸ In God's tabernacling within His people, they are made new (II Corinthians 5:17, Romans 6:4, Romans 7:6).²⁵⁹

Reconciliation

His people are not only freshly forgiven but those who are in Christ are made ministers of reconciliation (II Corinthians 5: 18-19).²⁶⁰ In His infinite wisdom God is

²⁵⁷ “But where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding? Man does not know its value, nor is it found in the land of the living “ (Job 28:12-13). “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise endures forever” (Psalm 111:10). “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding” (Proverbs 9:10). “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1).

²⁵⁸ Muggeridge states, “The prevailing impression I have come to have of the contemporary scene is of an ever-widening chasm between the fantasy in terms of which the media induce us to live, and the reality of our existence as made in the image of God, as sojourners in time whose true habitat is eternity. The fantasy is all-encompassing; awareness of reality requires the seeing eye which comes to those born again in Christ. It is like coming to after an anesthetic; the mists lift, consciousness returns, everything in the world is more beautiful than it ever was, because related to a reality beyond our world—every thought clearer, love deeper, joy more abounding, hope more certain. Who could hesitate, confronted with this choice between an old fantasy and a newly discovered reality? As well as prefer the colored pictures of golden beaches and azure skies in the travel supplements to the sea and the sky; mere erotic excitement to the ecstasy of love, life inside a camera to life inside a universe as an infinitesimal participant in its Creator's purposes.” In Muggeridge, *Christ and the Media*, 30. “‘Come now, and let us reason together,’ says the Lord, ‘Though your sins are as scarlet, they will be as white as snow; through they are red like crimson, they will be like wool’” (Isaiah 1:18). “I said to him, ‘My lord, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb’” (Revelation 7:14). “Blessed are those who was their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:14).

²⁵⁹ “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” (II Corinthians 5:17). “Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4). “But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter” (Romans 7:6).

²⁶⁰ “Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting

reconciling the world to Himself in Jesus Christ. Ironically, He employs redeemed sinners in the process. Those who follow Christ are to bring together what evil would pull apart, imitating the One through whom all things hold together (Col. 1: 15-18).²⁶¹ Jesus' prayer recorded in John 17 is one in which He expresses His desire for God's glory, a glory that is revealed in relationship. In this prayer His desire is for oneness of relationship of His human creations with the Creator as well as with each other. He alone is able to offer these redeemed relationships. It is through these right relationships that believers have an impact on the world, testifying to the truth of Christ. According to Christ's prayer, it is these right relationships with God through Christ and with others through His power that reveal God's glory in His Lordship (Ephesians 3:16-21).²⁶² What does it look like to be reconciled to God?

Creational Intent

"Genesis begins with a world untouched by sin. That pristine situation will not reoccur until Revelation 21."²⁶³ Until that time, Christians must live in the "already-but-not-yet" state of having an identity in Christ while in the process of being conformed to His image.²⁶⁴ According to Hamilton,

their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation" (II Corinthians 5:18-19).

²⁶¹ "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together" (Colossians 1:15-18).

²⁶² "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen" (Ephesians 3:16-21).

²⁶³ Victor P. Hamilton, "Genesis," in *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1989), 9.

²⁶⁴ Alice P. Mathews and M. Gay Hubbard, *Marriage Made in Eden: A Pre-Modern Perspective for a Post-Christian World* (Grand Rapids, MI: BakerBooks, 2004), 199.

The untarnished world of Gen 1-2 is shattered by Adam and Eve's dissatisfaction With their creaturely status, and their coveting of a godlike stature. Sin puts a wedge between relationships established by God. There is alienation between humankind and God, between man and the animals, between man and woman, between man and land, between man and himself.²⁶⁵

This alienation was not God's design. God's creational intention for human beings is that they might live in unhindered productive relationships with Him, with each other, and with the material world (Genesis 1:28-31).²⁶⁶ God called His material creation "very good" (Genesis 1:31). God purposefully created two distinct sexes, each in His image, the male from the ground and the female from the male, and rejoined the two into a "one flesh" relationship possibly designed to reflect the oneness within the Trinity, and, in a mysterious way in marriage, the Redeemer and the redeemed (Genesis 1:27-28; Genesis 2: 22-25; Ephesians 5: 31-33).²⁶⁷ Together the two were to enjoy God, the goodness of creation, and each other. They were to multiply the joy of relationship and live in loving dominion of the earth. They were to live in whole unashamed transparency of body and soul before and with God and each other.

To worship only God and know only goodness was the intent. Without the knowledge of evil, there would be no cause for power plays or displays, for there would not be

²⁶⁵ Hamilton in Elwell, 9.

²⁶⁶ "God blessed them; and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.' Then God said, 'Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food; and it was so. God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day'" (Genesis 1:28-31).

²⁶⁷ "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Genesis 1:27). "The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, 'This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed'" (Genesis 2:22-25). "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband" (Ephesians 5:31-33).

“power over” each other but “power to” love each other.²⁶⁸ True love involves freedom of response. God’s design includes power to choose as well as commands for well-being. Love involves boundaries and freedom. God generously gave both.

The Fall

The serpent capitalized on the gift of choice. Eve was deceived to distrust God and search for wisdom apart from its Source (Genesis 3: 1-6).²⁶⁹ Adam followed the created rather than the Creator and placed the woman’s word above the command of God (Genesis 3: 6, 17).²⁷⁰ Both disobeyed (Genesis 3:11-13).²⁷¹ The two, who had known only goodness and intimacy, became intimately acquainted with evil and hiding (Genesis 3:7). Instead of becoming like God, they became less like God. Instead of gaining power, the power that they had became corrupt (Genesis 3:16). Instead of being “one flesh” (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:4-6) they saw sexuality as shameful and intimacy as threatening (Genesis 3:7-10).²⁷² They became afraid of each other and of God. They sought to cover their bodies instead of confessing their sins.

²⁶⁸ Muggeridge contrasts Jesus and Satan. He describes Jesus as “teaching and healing and proclaiming His kingdom of love, in contradistinction to the Devil’s kingdom of power.” In Muggeridge, *Christ and the Media*. p. 38.

²⁶⁹ “Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’ The woman said to the serpent, ‘From the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.’ The serpent said to the woman, ‘You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’ When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate” Genesis 3:1-6.

²⁷⁰ “Then to Adam He said, ‘Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’” (Genesis 3:17).

²⁷¹ “And He said, ‘Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?’ The man said, ‘The woman whom You gave to me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate. ‘Then the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ And the woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate’ (Genesis 3:11-13).

²⁷² “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, ‘Where are you?’ He

Redemption

“But the wisdom from above is first pure and then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy” (James 1:17). In His wisdom God had a plan from the foundation of the world. God’s creational intention for human beings is that they might conform to the image of His Son and be summed up in Jesus Christ. Prior to the ordering of universe and the making of mankind, Jesus was willing to be the sacrifice to restore integrity of relationship (Revelation 13:8).²⁷³

By His grace, God unveiled His plan for redemption, not extinction. God cursed Satan and the ground, not the male or female, although both Adam and Eve, as individuals accountable to God, experienced the consequences of sin (Genesis 3:14-19).²⁷⁴ The enmity between the woman and the serpent was part of the curse of God on Satan. The enmity that God placed between the serpent and the woman and his seed and her seed revealed His ongoing declaration that she was His; she was and is unconditionally loved. Even though the female was now familiar with evil as well as good, she could choose to

said, ‘I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself’” (Genesis 3:7-10) “To the woman He said, ‘I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children; yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he will rule over you’” (Genesis 3:16). “And He answered and said, ‘Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate’” (Matthew 19:4-6).

²⁷³ “All who dwell on the earth will worship him, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of the Lamb who has been slain” (Revelation 13:8).

²⁷⁴ “The Lord God said to the serpent, ‘Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you will go, and dust you will eat all the days of your life; and I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel.’ To the woman He said, ‘I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children; yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.’ Then to Adam He said, ‘Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it;’ cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you will eat the plants of the field; by the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return’” (Genesis 3:14-19).

resist the evil and would eventually bear the Offspring that would crush evil. She would experience the multiplication of pain in childbirth. Some interpreters have seen this pain as a curse. Scripture does not cite it as such. It appears more likely to be a gracious opportunity to learn, and, much more than that, to continue living and participating in the giving of life. Instead of eternal death, Eve would personally understand the sacrificial system requiring blood for a life. In the menstrual cycle of shedding the dead cells of uterine tissue to prepare for the possibility of implantation of the human seed and in the process of childbirth, the female would understand the “uncleanness” of sin, but in such a way only to point her to her need for a Savior. God provided a way for life when death had been the choice. “Adam names his wife *Eve* which is connected with the word for “life, living...Here is hope in the midst of judgment.” ²⁷⁵

God cursed the ground but not Adam. For Adam, work would no longer be pleasurable, but toilsome. The toil may indeed have the ripple effect in relationships in which both good and evil are facts (Genesis 3:17-19). Adam’s rule over Eve and her desire for him are consequences of the Fall, descriptions of what it means to turn away from the love and respect for God and each other that they shared before. ²⁷⁶

Since Adam and Eve were made to join together in a one-flesh relationship, the direct consequences for one had indirect impact on the other. Eve’s tendency to look to Adam instead of God or to prefer his place instead of her own would be frustrating to both. He may not understand the pain she endures, and she may not comprehend the toil he

²⁷⁵ Hamilton in Elwell, 14. “Now the man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living” (Genesis 3:20).

²⁷⁶ Paul seems to be encouraging the return to God and the prescription for right relationships when he adds depth to the household codes by writing, “Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband” (Ephesians 5:33).

experiences. Misunderstandings rob the relationship of the meaning, and they fail to live out the metaphor of the interrelatedness and interdependence of the body and the head (Ephesians 5:23).²⁷⁷

When it is difficult to understand another, there is a tendency to reduce the person to a symbol in order to try to simplify the complexity.²⁷⁸ Could this be the reason for the symbolic representations of women evident throughout the centuries? In the Western world these stereotypes have been of Eve and Mary. The implications of the stereotypes are sexual. Eve's fall to a sensuous temptation has been linked with the sensual, and Mary's virginity has been linked to the sexual purity. The biblical account includes many unique women, each with different gifts and abilities. Western stereotypes fail to reflect the biblical account. God certainly does not provide only two examples of the female person.²⁷⁹ Shores insightfully questions, "What would it be like to trust God rather than stereotype the opposite sex?"²⁸⁰ The Christian's identity is that of a child of God through faith in Christ. It is an identity deeper than ethnicity, status, or gender:

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26-28).

The Christian's identity in Christ does not negate the beauty of God's plan for the

²⁷⁷ "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body" (Ephesians 5:23).

²⁷⁸ According to Elkind, when people are stressed, they often become self-absorbed and encounter difficulty in seeing other people "in all the complexity of their individual personalities" (p.27). He continues, "People under stress tend to see other people in the shorthand of symbols, not the often hard-to-decipher longhand of personhood... as certain obvious, easily-grasped stereotypes and abstractions" (p. 27). Symbols serve to free one from the "energy-consuming task of knowing" another as "a totality, a whole person. Symbols also conserve energy in another way. They are ready-at-hand targets for projecting unfulfilled needs, feelings, and emotions....for projecting some of the consequences of stress, fear, anxiety, and frustration" (p. 28). He claims this energy conservation is costly, causing ultimate harm to others and self. In Elkind, 27-28.

²⁷⁹ The reader is referred to Alice P. Mathews, *A Woman God Can Lead* (Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House Publishers, 1998).

²⁸⁰ Shores, 207.

diversity of the races or sexes, it simply places them on a higher plain—that of being first and foremost a child of God through faith in Christ, one whose primary purpose is imaging Christ, not conforming to the stereotypes of culture.

The power structure over anything but the earth was not mentioned in the Creation story because it did not have to be considered. Undefined authority may be inferred. Adam bore responsibility as God gave him the direct command and sought him first when the two had turned away from Him (Genesis 3:9). Part of Adam's consequence of toil may be related to the sense of responsibility and the sinful choice to be irresponsible. Part of the painful consequence of Eve may be that she places the man in God's position and expects him to be responsible for that which he is not. These consequences seem to be descriptions of living apart from God rather than prescriptions for living.²⁸¹ The dissatisfaction that results from sin appears to provide incentive to return to God. Pain is still present and toil is still involved in work, but Jesus came to restore fullness of joy (John 15:11) and abundant life (John 10:10) to those who will obey His commands and honor His creational intention.²⁸²

Restoration

In His prayer on the night Jesus was betrayed, He prayed for oneness among Christians that the world may know the Gospel (John 17:11, 20-23).²⁸³ In order to regain

²⁸¹ Hamilton in Elwell, 14.

²⁸² "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full" (John 15:11). "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

²⁸³ "I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You, Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are" (John 17:11). "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me" (John 17: 20-23).

what was lost at the Fall, women and men need to recognize the supreme Lordship of Christ. To effectively minister reconciliation to men and women is to recognize that the problems of pain, turning away, and toil are realities but not the core of personalities. At the deepest core of both male and female, is the God-given ability to be conformed to the image of Christ and in being so changed, to desire the glory of God more than the escape from the pain, the tendency toward independence, or the freedom from toil. To be like Christ is to desire unity so fervently that sin is sacrificed in order to achieve it.

The sacrifice of sin is only possible in turning to and following Christ's teachings with the aid of His Spirit (II Corinthians 3:16-18).²⁸⁴ Unity cannot be achieved independently. In fact, the serpent tempted Adam and Eve with autonomy and gave them depravity instead. It is important to recognize the current culture's emphasis on freedom from need. Barger writes, "We do not want to need anyone or anything because that is how we have defined freedom."²⁸⁵ Christ defines freedom as knowing the truth, a result of abiding in His Word and obeying it (John 8:31-32). Simone Weil wrote that the soul can persuade itself that it is not hungry for God only by lying, "for the reality of its hunger is not a belief, it is a certainty."²⁸⁶ Jesus calls Satan "the father of lies" (John 8:44).²⁸⁷ The human being in God's image needs God and needs His people in order to grow spiritually (I John 1:7).²⁸⁸ Instead of attempting autonomy through radical individualism,

²⁸⁴ "But whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit (II Corinthians 3:16-18).

²⁸⁵ Barger, 27.

²⁸⁶ Simone Weil, "Forms of the Implicit Love of God," in the essays by Simone Weil excerpted by Fiedler. *Waiting for God* (New York: Harper Collins, 1973), 210.

²⁸⁷ "You are of your father, the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).

²⁸⁸ "But if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin" (I John 1:7).

The divine community continually calls us into relationship as the only viable grounding for the human self. A restored relationship with our Creator, the eternal I AM, provides the basis for personal identity, freeing us from seeking other harbors for the self. This redemptive relationship is the beginning of bringing the fragments of a disjointed body-self back into the whole. This is the God that Jesus came to reveal.²⁸⁹

It is Paul's uniform teaching that man is constituted of a unity of two entities, body and soul.²⁹⁰ Paul writes about the desire to change the body into one that will never die, a hope based on God's original intent and assurance of His Spirit that He will do it (II Corinthians 5:5).²⁹¹ In the time of the "already-but-not-yet" it is wise to note the serpent's tactics to turn Eve, body and soul, away from God in order to address similar tactics today.²⁹²

Contemporary Temptations

Genesis 3:6 reveals that the temptation appeals to Eve's physical appetites and her imagination.²⁹³ According to Hamilton, "The serpent does not ask homage from Eve. Rather, he indirectly suggests that she shift her commitment from doing God's will to doing her own will."²⁹⁴ He invites her to focus, not on God's goodness and provision, but on what she lacks (Genesis 3:1-3).²⁹⁵ She begins to distrust God and to focus on taking rather than on God's giving. He also subtly questions God's Word, and she begins to listen to another voice, doubting God's truthfulness (Genesis 3:4).²⁹⁶ She then begins

²⁸⁹ Barger, 124.

²⁹⁰ McDonald, 78.

²⁹¹ "Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge" (II Corinthians 5:5).

²⁹² Mathews and Hubbard, 199.

²⁹³ "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate" (Genesis 3:6).

²⁹⁴ Hamilton in Elwell, 13.

²⁹⁵ "Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, 'Indeed, has God said, You shall not eat from the any tree of the garden?' The woman said to the serpent, 'From the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die'" (Genesis 3:1-3).

²⁹⁶ "The serpent said to the woman, 'You surely will not die!'" (Genesis 3:4).

existing in a lie rather than living in community. The lies told to women are not much different from those told in the Garden.

The culture encourages consumption in lieu of casting cares on God (I Peter 5:7).²⁹⁷ Instead of recognizing the reality of problems and pain in life, consumerism seeks to cover them with purchases. Jesus teaches His followers to observe nature and see God's provision (Matthew 6:25-34; Luke 12:22-32). Consumerism focuses on what is lacking. Jesus teaches that true identity can be found only by denying the self and following the Source of Life (Matthew 10:39, 16:24; Luke 9:23).²⁹⁸ Consumerism preaches self-actualization through ownership. Instead of obtaining the peace that surpasses understanding, the consumer is all too often left disappointed and confused (Philippians 4:7).²⁹⁹

The images designed to entice into dissatisfaction and result in consumption are intertwined with the question of identity. Because of the sin nature at work, identity is often confused with power. And so the quest for beauty takes a wrong turn. Beauty gets confused with seduction, attracting through exerting power rather than empowering others. Fake beauty seeks to impress rather than to express honor and affirm God's good gift of relationships. Turning away from God's ways leads to ugliness and disconnectedness. There is no grace, wisdom, or beauty apart from God.

Breaking the First and Second Commandments has serious consequences.³⁰⁰ God

²⁹⁷ "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you" (I Peter 5:6-7).

²⁹⁸ "He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it" (Matthew 10: 39). "Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it' (Matthew 16:24-25). " "And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow Me" (Luke 9:23).

²⁹⁹ "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

commands for His people to have no other gods, make no idols, nor worship them. When one breaks these commands, he exchanges the truth that God alone is worthy of worship for a lie—that anything else will satisfy. He suppresses the truth of the image of God impressed upon him and worships false images (Romans 1:18-25).³⁰¹ Like ancient times the contemporary scene is filled with images. The commands of God are against service to any image. According to Wise, “The objects that a man considers to be worthy of worship define his way of life, and the way of life followed by a person or group inevitably leads to illness or to health. A man’s god is more significant for his health than is generally acknowledged.”³⁰²

Paulsell poses the questions,

Why do athletes’ feats of excellence not depress us like the perfection of models? Why do these bodies moving at the extreme edge of exertion not inspire the kinds of feelings that looking at the thin, exquisitely dressed bodies that our culture everywhere celebrates do—namely, feelings of dissatisfaction with our bodies and frustration that our bodies do not and most likely cannot look like the bodies of fashion models and movie stars?³⁰³

Could the answer lie in the false images of female bodies as commodities intertwined with false identity of consumerism? The depression that Paulsell mentions is evidence of the power of idols over the mind; feats do not threaten, faces threaten; feats are not

³⁰⁰ Exodus 20:3-4: “You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on earth beneath or in the water under the earth.”

³⁰¹ “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power, and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through that which has been made, so that they are without excuse. For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed creatures. Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen “Romans 1:18-25).

³⁰² Wise, 247.

³⁰³ Paulsell, 119.

something women are expected to achieve. They do not exert the power of attraction. Feats do not impose the same ideal that the culture's definition of beauty does. They do not apply the same pressure as those images that attempt to define beauty apart from God. As such, they do not compel the same adulation as do those that promise allure. The images would not depress if they did not impact. Why do women allow their influence? When women receive the world's knowledge (exemplified, for women, in images) instead of the wisdom of biblical revelation they are robbed of real beauty. Any standard other than God's is not good. Turning to false images takes away from life by stealing from beauty, killing joy, and destroying integrity of relationships.

According to Barger,

There is not only an almost universally prescribed beauty ideal but also a universal belief that any woman can attain it through consumption. By paying the price and buying the right clothes, haircut, hair and skin products, and makeup, girls as young as eleven can be transformed, says the myth.³⁰⁴

The myth is that any transformation can take place apart from Christ. It is He who purchased authentic beauty. The Creator God knows the power of images over identity. He commands against what would control or define His people, what would have power over them rather than what would empower them as does enjoying and glorifying Him.³⁰⁵

Transformation

In the interwoven events of Matthew 9:18-26 (cf. Mark 5: 22-43, Luke 8:40-56) Jesus raises a dead girl and heals a hemorrhaging woman.³⁰⁶ The woman's malady made her

³⁰⁴ Barger, 44.

³⁰⁵ Psalms 24, 95, and 100 acknowledge the ownership of God as well as the dependence of God's creation upon Him and offer responses of praise.

³⁰⁶ "And there came a man name Jairus, and he was an official of the synagogue; and he fell at Jesus' feet, and began to implore Him to come to his house; for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying. But as He went, the crowds were pressing against Him, and a woman who had a hemorrhage for twelve years, and could not be healed by anyone, came up behind Him and touched the fringe of His cloak, and immediately her hemorrhage stopped. And Jesus said, 'Who is the one who touched Me?' And while they were all denying it, Peter said, 'Master, the people are crowding and pressing

ritually unclean (Lev. 15:19-33). She would have been unable to enter the sanctuary for the twelve years that she suffered with it. In faith the unclean touched the Temple of the living God. Grasping the edge of His cloak, possibly His tassel, she received restoration of health. Chamblin writes, “Far from being defiled by the unclean, Jesus cleanses the defiled.”³⁰⁷ He alone could fulfill the ceremonial and civic law and He alone could make clean the issue of blood. According to Luke, while Jesus was interacting with the woman, Jairus’ daughter died. The friends of Jairus considered any further activity to be futile (v.49) and they even ridiculed Jesus’ naivete (v.53). But Jesus’ words to Jairus were, “Don’t be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed” (v.50). Chamblin writes, “Thus, we see that the resuscitation of Jairus’ daughter fits with the prior story; in both instances Jesus responds to faith. Jesus manifests His power over disease and death.”³⁰⁸

It is Jesus alone who is able to heal women and revive girls from what would rob them of life. He continues to cleanse the unclean. He is the warrior who is able to overcome the evil that would absorb her uniqueness of creation into a consumer identity. It is He who is able to throw out of the temple of her body those who would denigrate it by making it

in on You.’ But Jesus said, ‘Someone did touch Me, for I was aware that power had gone out of Me.’ When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed. And He said to her, ‘Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace.’ While He was still speaking, someone came from the house of the synagogue official, saying, ‘Your daughter has died; do not trouble the Teacher anymore.’ But when Jesus heard this, He answered him, ‘Do not be afraid any longer; only believe, and she will be made well.’ When He came to the house, He did not allow anyone to enter with Him, except Peter and John and James, and the girl’s father and mother. Now they were all weeping and lamenting for her; but He said, ‘Stop weeping for she has not died, but is asleep.’ And they began laughing at Him, knowing that she had died. He, however, took her by the hand and called, saying, ‘Child, arise!’ And her spirit returned, and she got up immediately; and He gave orders for something to be given her to eat. Her parents were amazed; but He instructed them to tell no one what had happened” (Luke 8: 41-56).

³⁰⁷ J. Knox Chamblin, “Matthew” in *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1989), 733.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 817.

an object or place of exchange. It is He who has righteous anger about merchandising in a place made for worship. Jesus instructed the Samaritan woman during their meeting at the well that the time had come with His earthly presence for true worshippers to “worship in Spirit and truth” in a temple not located in Jerusalem (John 4:23).³⁰⁹ Spiritual and truthful worship involves what Muggeridge termed “the seeing eye.”³¹⁰ It is Jesus who restores the vision of His followers. He enables those who trust Him to see through, not just with the eyes. According to Muggeridge, “To see through the eye to grasp the significance of what is seen, to see it in relation to the totality of God’s creation.”³¹¹

Being defined by Christ instead of culture is freeing. Barger states, “We can be in a culture but not ultimately defined by it through participating in God’s invisible kingdom.”(102) Barna writes,

A biblical worldview is a means of experiencing, interpreting, and responding to reality in light of biblical perspective. This life lens provides a personal understanding of every idea, opportunity, and experience based on the identification and application of relevant biblical principles so that every choice we make may be consistent with God’s principles and commands.³¹²

He continues, “Living consistently with His principles is the right thing to do. Its rightness is not because of the outcomes; the outcomes are because of its rightness.”³¹³

Thus, the real contribution of the minister in health

is out of the realm of magic and mysticism...It is within the realm of laws governing personal and social life; not, indeed, man-made laws, but rather those written into the fundamental nature of our being.³¹⁴ Neither religious formalities nor antireligious convictions provide impunity for the violation of these laws.”³¹⁵

³⁰⁹ “But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers” (John 4:23).

³¹⁰ Muggeridge, 30.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, 63.

³¹² Barna, 6.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, 13.

³¹⁴ Here Wise is alluding to Genesis 1:27, Romans 1:20 and Hebrews 8:10 and 10:16 in which Paul is quoting from Jeremiah 31:31-34.

³¹⁵ Wise, 261.

Even so, according to Hubbard and Mathews, “Contemporary Christians find it strange to think of themselves as having only a secondary allegiance to the culture around them.”³¹⁶ Yet, the biblical mandate is “to live out a radical alternative to this present culture.”³¹⁷ Citing I Corinthians 1:29-31 and Colossians 2:9-10, they encourage Christians to “embrace the already-reality that they are complete in Christ, who has become for God’s people, their righteousness, holiness, and redemption.”³¹⁸ For the Christian “the penalty of sin is cancelled and the power of sin is broken through appropriation of the work of Christ.”³¹⁹ Christ renews real beauty by His resurrection power. The transformation described in Romans 12:1-2 involves the continual turning to Christ instead of to culture.³²⁰ God’s people “cannot logically expect those who are not His people to construct a world that reflects the values and way of thinking into which God calls His own.”³²¹ Paul cautions against “drifting into unthinking conformity with the surrounding culture.”³²²

The Christian is to live in such a way that extends the freedom of truth.

According to Barger,

The presence of the incarnate Word, Jesus, makes a claim on our lives above the demands of the world and its idols. Once surrendered to the crucified and resurrected Son of God, we begin to destroy the demands of cultural idols. Aided by the Spirit of Jesus, our imagination is renewed to see what is possible, ‘so that the life of Jesus,

³¹⁶ Mathews and Hubbard, 29.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 29.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 225. “So that no man may boast before God but by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, so that , just as it is written, ‘Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord’” (I Corinthians 1:29-31). “For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority” (Colossians 2: 9-10).

³¹⁹ Shores, 217.

³²⁰ “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:1-2).

³²¹ Mathews and Hubbard, 25.

³²² *Ibid.*, 26.

too, may be visible in our body.’ (II Corinthians 4:11 NJB) As together in worship we name the things in the world that exercise false claims on our lives, God’s definition can be made flesh. This allows us to cooperate in the redemption of the world through the works done in our bodies.³²³

God reveals His glory in the cloud, the heavens, the rock of relationship, and the temple.³²⁴ All the claims of culture are to be silenced when the Lord is in His temple (Habakkuk 2:20).³²⁵ The body of the Christian has become a temple in Christ (I Corinthians 6:19).³²⁶ God says that the temple is the place where He will dwell among His people (Exodus 25:8) and make His name known (II Samuel 7:13, I Kings 5:5).³²⁷ Closely communing with God will mean moving toward community, as the end result of worship is service. Following Jesus involves building up the Body of Christ and extending His kingdom. Knowing and being known by Christ will involve caring for His humanity, body and soul (Matthew 25:31-46).³²⁸ His glory is revealed in relationship

³²³ Barger, 182.

³²⁴ God reveals His glory in the cloud in Exodus 16:10 and Exodus 24:16. Psalm 19:1: “The heavens are telling the glory of God.” In Exodus 33:18-23, 34: 5-7 God partially reveals His glory to Moses at his request. The glory of the Lord fills the tabernacle in Exodus 40:34-38. The tent of meeting is filled with His glory in Numbers 14:10 and covered with His glory in 16:19, 42; 20:6. The glory of the Lord filled the temple in I Kings 8:10-11; cf. II Chronicles 5:14, 7:1-3. According to Hoffmeier, “That same glory would depart when Judah’s sins reached the point where God’s sacred presence could no longer tolerate the situation (Ezekiel 10:18; 11:22-23) and the temple would be destroyed. But after the exile when the temple would be rebuilt, God’s glory once again would fill the Most Holy Place (Haggai 2:7-9). Ultimately that glory would be revealed in Jesus Christ: ‘The Word became flesh and made His dwelling [lit. tabernacled] among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth’” (John 1:14).

James K. Hoffmeier, “Exodus,” in *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1989), 63.

³²⁵ “But the Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth be silent before Him” (Habakkuk 2:20).

³²⁶ “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?” (I Corinthians 6:20).

³²⁷ “Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them” (Exodus 25:8). “He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever” II Samuel 7:13). “Behold, I intend to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spoke to David my father, saying, ‘Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, he will build the house for My name’ (I Kings 5:5).

³²⁸ “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked,

(John 17:22-26).³²⁹

Intimacy with God will require forsaking attempts to cover the self, such as blaming or idolizing the body. It will involve allowing Christ to cover the Christian with His robe of righteousness instead of giving in to the tendency to seek other apparel, such as entertaining ideas apart from God's revelation or enslavement to images rather than worshiping the true God. According to Shores, "Remembering and resting in his utter dependence on an utterly dependable God is the *sine qua non* of being human."³³⁰

Acknowledging total dependence is a step toward understanding true identity. Wise states,

Christianity aims directly at identification of the individual with Christ as the ideal. In presenting to mankind the ideas of the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the kingdom of God as an order toward which man should strive, Christianity has given a basis for the integration of man's inner and outer worlds capable of mobilizing his energy and talents in a way of life that leads to lasting values.³³¹

Belenky describes a woman in her thirties who had earned a doctorate in philosophy but who was troubled greatly when she came to the realization "that the skills of a

and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite you in, or naked, and clothe You? When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.' Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me;' Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life" (Matthew 25:31-46).

³²⁹ "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You love Me may be in them, and I in them" (John 17:22-26).

³³⁰ Shores, 202.

³³¹ Wise, 261.

philosopher seemed poorly matched for the task of knowing herself.”³³² What Greek philosophy can never explain to her is that identity and image are intertwined in Christ. The image of God is imprinted upon her and she is designed to conform to the image of Christ (Genesis 1:27; Romans 8:29).³³³ Christians are the children of God, identified by faith and identified with Christ while in the process of conforming to His likeness (Matthew 18:4, I John 3:1-2).³³⁴ Knowing and being known by Him involves sharing the new identity with others in empowering ways within His kingdom and extending it. Thus,

The concept of identity expands to include the experience of interconnection. The moral domain is similarly enlarged by the inclusion of responsibility and care in relationships. And the underlying epistemology correspondingly shifts from the Greek ideal of knowledge as a correspondence between mind and form to the Biblical conception of knowing as a process of human relationship.³³⁵

The Christian life is one of worshipful service to God in love toward man through Christ, the mediator. Being identified in Christ and gradually conformed to His image unmask the fairy tales of Greek philosophy. True tales can be told about the Savior who is able to rescue sinners from sin and death, (Luke 19:10, I Timothy 1:15, Hebrews 7:25) and to stand them in “the presence of His glory blameless with great joy” (Jude 24).³³⁶ He calls the Christian “out of darkness into His marvelous light” (I Peter 2:9).³³⁷ On the

³³² Belenky, 135.

³³³ “God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them” (Genesis 1:27). “For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren” (Romans 8:29).

³³⁴ “Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:4). “See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him” (I John 3:1-2).

³³⁵ Gilligan, 173.

³³⁶ “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). “It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all” (I Timothy 1:15). “Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25). “Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy” (Jude 24).

³³⁷ “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (I Peter 2:9).

“dark continent” of male and female souls, it is Jesus alone who can shine forth light (John 1:4, II Corinthians 4:6, Ephesians 5:8-9,14).³³⁸ When life is viewed through a Biblical lens, fantasy fades away and the focus becomes clearer and clearer as God reveals Himself to His people in His Word. Experiencing truth enables the Christian to understand that authenticity cannot be purchased in the marketplace. Real life requires that a person be bought by Jesus Christ, the Word of God made flesh, who, through the power of the Holy Spirit now inhabits His people, transforming them into His temples. The real story is something that a consumer society needs to hear: Jesus Christ has paid the price (John 19:30; I Corinthians 6:20; I Corinthians 7:23).³³⁹

To His people Jesus may well pose the question, “Do you wish to get well?”(John 5:6). He states that He gives “the Spirit of truth to those who obey Him in love”(John 14:15-17).³⁴⁰ He states that the world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees him nor knows Him” (John 14:17). When Christians look to those who do not see or know God they may see what appears to be and fail to recognize reality. Living in the fantasy of unbiblical thinking leads to behavior patterns and relationships that are ungodly and ultimately to illness rather than health. Fantasy limits productivity. But Jesus states, “If

³³⁸ Sigmund Freud referred to the “dark continent” of the female psyche in his 1926 work, *The Question of Lay Analysis*, vol. XX, in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. and ed. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1961), p.212 as cited in Gilligan, 24.

“In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men” (John 1:4). “For God, who said, ‘Light shall shine out of darkness,’ is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God and not from ourselves” (II Corinthians 4:6). “For you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), For this reason it says, ‘Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you’”(Ephesians 5:8- 9,14).

³³⁹ “Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished!’ And he bowed His head and gave up His spirit (John 19:30). “For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body” (I Corinthians 6:20). “You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men” (I Corinthians 7:23).

³⁴⁰ “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not know Him , but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you” (John 14:15-17).

anyone loves Me, he will obey My teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our abode with him” (John 14:23). Abiding in Christ is synonymous with fruitfulness (John 15:5, Galatians 5:22-23).³⁴¹ If Christians will turn to the Word of God, they will be set free from false philosophies. They will be free to live a life that is a statement of truth, enabled to share a continually new story.

³⁴¹ “I am the vine, you are the branches, he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law” (Galatians 5:22-23)

Chapter Three

Literature Review

The literature that has most directly influenced this work draws from works in marketing, media, history, psychology, theology, and Christian apologetics and worldview.

Marketing

The literature on marketing provides a more thorough understanding of the forces at work within the culture to promote consumerism. Examining the mindset of the marketer reveals the conceptual framework from which they seek to manipulate human behavior. The following resources aid in the recognition of the influences of marketing in the present consumer culture.

The Soul of the New Consumer by David Lewis and Darren Bridger³⁴² is an eye-opening account of the extent to which consumerism has become an ideology. The authors state that for some people consumption has replaced religious beliefs as their main source of solace and comfort. Others are making consumer choices based on a need to satisfy an inner hunger rather than an external appetite. Personal and social behavior is increasingly determined by what people choose to buy and why. Lewis and Bridger chose the noun *soul* because they believe it aptly describes the deeper needs that the purchaser is seeking to meet, whether it is used in the spiritual or the secular sense. They emphasize that the consumer is often on a quest for authenticity amid scarcities of time, attention, and trust.

³⁴² David Lewis and Darren Bridger, *The Soul of the New Consumer* (London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2000).

In *How Customers Think: Essential Insights into the Mind of the Market*, Gerald Zaltman³⁴³ notes that the selection process of consumers stems from unconscious forces and is greatly influenced by the consumer's social and physical context. He recommends an interdisciplinary approach to marketing in order to elicit the unconscious thoughts and feelings of the consumer so that the meaning of the advertisement mixes with the memory of the consumer. Because of the mingling of meaning and memory it is the job of the marketer to create lasting impressions so that the product, by association, will become a part of the consumer's unconscious mind. He advises elicitation of metaphors from the consumer as a technique that may best reveal cognitive processes beyond those shown in literal language. This includes the use of archetypal stories to associate with products.

The premise in de Maneke de Mooij's *Consumer Behavior and Culture: Consequences for Global Marketing Advertising*³⁴⁴ is that consumer behavior is culture-bound and does not converge across cultures. He studied sociodemographic behavior variables; concepts of self, personality and identity; and mental processes such as perception, learning and language across cultures. His research demonstrates the influence of culture on consumption. His presentation of methods used to target collective versus individualistic cultures proves fascinating. His conclusion is that there are global products, but people are not global; they are heavily influenced by their culture. This book provided insights not only into the mind of marketers but to the powerful impact of culture on consumption. Examining the mind of the marketer is

³⁴³ Gerald Zaltman, *How Customers Think: Essential Insights into the Mind of the Market* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2003).

³⁴⁴ Maneke de Mooij, *Consumer Behavior and Culture: Consequences for Global Marketing Advertising* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004).

imperative if one seeks to teach women how to counter the influences of a consumer culture with a Christian worldview.

Media

The media play a significant role in promoting consumption and in the objectification of women. It is critical to study the impact of the media on the mind of the consumer. These resources demonstrated the extent to which media literacy matters in effectively ministering to women.

Michael Medved,³⁴⁵ a film critic for the New York Times and cohost of “Sneak Previews,” the weekly movie review show on PBS, examines the attack on religion, the assault on the family, and the offensive and violent content of the popular media and its influence on culture. His premise is that Hollywood ignores the concerns of the majority of Americans regarding the destructive messages featured in recent movies, television, and music. This work informs the reader about the serious impact of the media on the culture despite many in the culture who are alarmed by the trends. *Hollywood versus America* affirms the importance of countering the negative effects of some of the messages of the media with Christian instruction.

Prior to teaching women a theology of the body, it is important to be aware of competing forces within western culture. *Christ and the Media* by Malcolm Muggeridge,³⁴⁶ British journalist and commentator on radio and television, assists the reader in recognizing the destructive influences within the media. He noted the tendency of the media to present fantasy as actuality and predicted some of the problems that can occur when people are deceived. He poignantly described the awe that future

³⁴⁵ Michael Medved, *Hollywood versus America* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers/Zondervan, 1992).

³⁴⁶ Malcolm Muggeridge, *Christ and the Media* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977).

archeologists might experience when they encounter and uncover the remnants of consumerism and cannot help equating it with the religion of the time.

Ravi Zacharias was inspired by Muggeridge's work and gathered a panel of speakers to discuss the present impact of the arts and the media in the west. In the recorded conversation *Christ, the Arts, and the Media*³⁴⁷ Mr. Zacharias is joined by Michael Medved, film critic, David Aikman, Sr. Foreign Correspondent for *Time Magazine*, and Ted Baer, Chief Executive Officer of the Christian film and Television Commission. This series provides insight into the messages conveyed through the media and the progression of communication from oral to scribal to print to images. Media literacy is imperative if one seeks to help women think biblically about their bodies in a world full of images.

Psychology of Women

Studying women's epistemology, how women acquire knowledge, is also important if one is to assist them to combat consumerism with a Christian mindset. *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind* by Mary Belenky and her colleagues³⁴⁸ describes research on women's epistemologies. These ways of knowing include silence, received knowledge, subjective knowledge, procedural knowledge, and constructed knowledge. Individual women may move along a continuum, or at times revert to prior approaches, depending on the situation. The final chapter, "Connected Teaching," is especially beneficial to the practical application of the ministry project with

³⁴⁷ Ravi Zacharias, speaker, "Mind Games in World of Images," in *Christ, the Arts, and the Media*, (Atlanta, GA: Ravi Zacharias International Ministries), cassette recording.

³⁴⁸ Belenky and others, *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind* (New York: Basic Books, 1986). Mary Field Belenky is co-principal investigator of Listening Partners, a project promoting intellectual development in rural women, at the University of Vermont. Blythe McVicker Clinchy is Professor of Psychology at Wellesley College. Nancy Rule Goldberger is a faculty member at the Fielding Institute, Santa Barbara, California. Jill Matuck Tarule is a Professor in the clinical psychology division at Lesley College Graduate School.

its emphasis on cooperation between teacher and student and helping women toward community and integrity.

Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*³⁴⁹ examines the interaction of experience and thought regarding conceptions of self and morality, conflict and choice that may be interpreted incorrectly in the developmental theories of psychology, causing a bias against the female personality. Her research lends credence to the integrity and validity of female thought processes and offers a foundation on which to build new theory that will better serve the true natures of both of the sexes. This work informs the ministry project concerning the relational decision-making process of many women and the expansion of the concept of identity to the experience of interconnection.

Women: The Misunderstood Majority by M. Gay Hubbard³⁵⁰ focuses on information and misinformation about women as consumers of mental health services, as women, and as individuals in order to establish clarity for the counseling process. In this insightful book she provides practical information for counselors and their women clients concerning women's distinctive needs and the social reality of women's life experiences. She states that Christian spirituality makes psychological sense. It also makes physical sense, and both apply to the ministry project. Hubbard believes that only truth can prevent absorption of the errors of the culture.

Mary Pipher studied anthropology before psychology and approaches the

³⁴⁹ Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982). Carol Gilligan is Associate Professor of Education at the Graduate School of Education of Harvard University.

³⁵⁰ M. Gay Hubbard, *Women: The Misunderstood Majority* (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing, 1992). Hubbard earned her Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh. She is a board member of the American Association of Christian Counselors and serves as a counseling associate in private practice.

individual psyche through the lens of culture. In *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*³⁵¹ she identifies the reasons for the quenched spirits of female adolescents and women as the media driven, money-hungry, physically and chemically abusive culture that surrounds them. From Pipher's poignant examples and insightful experience it seems that girls do not get to grow up; instead they have to build up an identity in order to fight for their lives against the lies. (Pipher does not write from a biblical worldview but agrees with many biblical principles in her presentation and summation of the culture.) This book affirms the need for ministry to young girls concerning the value of and honorable treatment of the body.

History

Joan Jacobs Brumberg agrees with Pipher regarding the strong influence of popular culture on maturing girls and women. In *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls*³⁵² she expresses concern about the influence of the media and popular culture on maturing girls which contributes to their overemphasis on the body, turning it into a project that consumes their time and energy, leaving little left for productive living. She examines the procession of this problem by looking into diaries of women from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This work affirms the need for a Christian approach to understanding and caring for the body as a place through which to live a full life of service, not a project resulting from enslavement to the images of culture.

Gail Collins delves into American History as well in *America's Women: 400 Years of*

³⁵¹ Mary Pipher, *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1994).

³⁵² Joan J. Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* (New York: Random House, 1997). Brumberg is a professor of American history at Cornell University who has been recognized by the Rockefeller and Guggenheim foundations, The National Endowment for the Humanities, and the MacDowell Colony.

Dolls, Drudges, Helpmates, and Heroines.³⁵³ This work tells the story of more than four centuries of history with emphasis on the women who participated in shaping the nation and made a difference in the lives of girls and women in this country. This work is informative for the ministry project as it provides an interesting summary of the experience of women in America.

In *A History of Women in the West*, Volumes I through V, beginning with antiquity and progressing to the present, the editors reject the idea that women are an object in history as they seek to understand the place of women, the condition of women, and the roles and powers of women throughout the centuries. The history is fundamentally relational because society as a whole is examined. Chosen collaborators from America and Europe contribute to each volume. *Volume I: From Ancient Goddesses to Christian Saints*³⁵⁴ studies ancient goddesses, the sexual philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, the division of sexes in Roman law, figures of women, marriage in ancient Greece, body politics in ancient Rome, rituals in Grecian cities, the religious roles of Roman women, and early Christian women.

In *Volume II: Silences of the Middle Ages*³⁵⁵ the concentration is on the men and women who lived in areas dominated by the culture of Catholicism between the sixth and the fifteenth centuries. The editors admit the difficulty of peering beneath the surface of medieval times to find out what life was like for women. The prominent economic, political, and cultural figures are male. The role of women has been assumed to have

³⁵³ Gail Collins, *America's Women: 400 Years of Dolls, Drudges, Helpmates, and Heroines*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2003). Collins is the editorial page editor of "New York Times."

³⁵⁴ Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, general eds., Paula S. Pantel, ed., *A History of Women in the West, Volume I: From Ancient Goddesses to Christian Saints* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992).

³⁵⁵ Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, general eds., Christine Kaplisch-Zuber, ed., *A History of Women in the West, Volume II: Silences of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994).

been limited to reproduction and family life. Theological views of femininity revolved around the sacred triad of Eve, Mary, and Mary Magdalene.

*Volume III: Renaissance and Enlightenment Paradoxes*³⁵⁶ explores women, work and family in this period, the body, appearance, and sexuality, the beautiful woman, the education of daughters, women in politics, women in the images, literature, and theater, a sampling of eighteenth century philosophy, the discourse of medicine and science, and females as journalists, witches, prostitutes, criminals, and protestors. A portion of the ministry project will include ideals of beauty through the centuries. This work contributes to the understanding of these ideals and the response of women to them.

*Volume IV: Emerging Feminism from Revolution to World War*³⁵⁷ covers the late eighteenth through the early nineteenth centuries and emphasizes the changes in the lives of women after the political and industrial revolutions. With the industrial revolution and democratic politics came changes in women's roles and rights. Democratic ideals contrasted with inequality between the sexes and gave rise to feminism, a social and political movement including a variety of expressions with the aim of equal rights for the sexes.³⁵⁸

*Volume V: Toward a Cultural Identity in the Twentieth Century*³⁵⁹ explores the development in areas such as women's health and women's education. The growth of

³⁵⁶ Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, general eds., Natalie Z. Davis, and Arlette Farge, eds., *A History of Women in the West, Volume III: Renaissance and Enlightenment Paradoxes* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994).

³⁵⁷ Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, general eds., Genevieve Fraisse and Michelle Perrot, eds., *A History of Women in the West, Volume IV: Emerging Feminism from Revolution to World War* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1995).

³⁵⁸ Unfortunately, feminism produced its own set of images of women and for women, tempting many women to worship at the altar of equality while betraying fullness of personhood as expressed in God-given gender distinctions.

³⁵⁹ Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, general eds., Francoise Thebaud, ed., *A History of Women in the West, Volume V: Toward a Cultural Identity in the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996).

cities and supply of consumer goods quickened the pace of life. Changes in the nature of housework and child-rearing occurred with technological advances and employment opportunities. The travails in war, expansion of opportunities, and dilemmas of work and families were part of women's experience in the twentieth century. The chapters, "The Ambivalent Message of Woman in Mass Culture," by Luisa Passerini and "Women, Images, and Representation," by Anne Higgonet are particularly helpful in understanding what women face in the battle for a biblical worldview of the body.

In his medical history of women in the west over the past four centuries, *History of Women's Bodies*, Edward Shorter³⁶⁰ notes that before 1900 femininity was basically a negative concept for most women as they often suffered ill health and were considered to be inferior to men. Because they were sicklier, more at risk of dying, and were more likely to have problems such as anemia than men, they accepted subordination as part of the natural order. In his opinion, after about 1930 women were released by advances in medicine from many of the physical burdens earlier endured. As a result they no longer accept their subordination as natural but see it as a social construction. This book is primarily about the physical experiences that women have had with their bodies. It is an excellent resource for understanding the reality of the corporeal experience with which many women in the past had to deal (and with which many women in undeveloped countries continue to contend).

Theology

In *Eve's Revenge: Women and a Spirituality of the Body*, Lillian Calles Barger³⁶¹

³⁶⁰ Edward Shorter, *A History of Women's Bodies* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1982). Shorter is a physician in the field of obstetrics and gynecology.

³⁶¹ Lillian C. Barger, *Eve's Revenge: Women and a Spirituality of the Body* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2003).

addresses the physical, social, and spiritual issues of this time with biblical injunctions. Speaking specifically to feminists who are increasingly embracing spiritualities that focus on power, she makes the point that any spirituality that does not touch the physical aspects of women's lives is devoid of the power it promises. She counters the current emphasis on empty spiritualities with that which will fill, Jesus Christ. She examines chapters one through three of Genesis and also gives New Testament examples of the physicality of Jesus. She reports the errors of the Church Fathers that contributed to the resistance of women to the Gospel of Christ. In the Epilogue, she links the physical body with the sinful flesh, equating the physical body with sin, giving it a meaning other than the one she seems to have implied throughout the book. This book informs and affirms the ministry project of reaching women through acknowledging and addressing their bodily concerns with the Gospel.

Cairn in *The Image of God in Man*³⁶² writes that the gift of the *imago Dei* to humanity implies that humanity, although a sinner remains a rational being capable of spiritual fellowship with God. He asserts that though the *imago Dei* is mentioned only three times in the Old Testament, it is implied throughout the thought-world of the Old Testament. He examines the writings of the church Fathers to the theologians of the second half of the twentieth century. He then explores the view of humanity offered by Karl Marx, by Charles Darwin, and by Sigmund Freud. This work was beneficial in the understanding the doctrine of the image of God in humanity as it has been understood throughout the centuries.

The Christian View of Man by H.G. McDonald³⁶³ also deals with the concept of

³⁶² David Cairn, *The Image of God in Man* (London: Fontana Library of Theology and Philosophy, 1973).

³⁶³ Hugh D. McDonald, *The Christian view of Man* (Westchester. Illinois: Crossway Books, 1981).

humanity as a moral being made in the image of God. The author examines the Hebraic understanding of humans as a whole beings with no ethical division between the soul and the body and aligns that presentation of man with that presented in the writings of the apostles John and Paul. He investigates Christian historical formulations in answer to the question of the psalmist in Psalm 8, “What is man?” He then continues his exploration of human thought about the nature of man that has occurred in modern times as Romanticism rose with secular culture, the deifying of human reason in Kantian philosophy, the empiricism of David Hume, the group consciousness of the industrial revolution and the development of evolutionism, existentialism, and psychoanalysis. He proceeds with the humanism of contemporary thought and concludes that though humanistic faith may alter conditions, it cannot alter character as does the Christian faith.

In his dissertation, *Image of God and the Flesh: An Exploration of the Image of God and the Flesh as a Basis for a Biblical Counseling Model*, S.D. Shores³⁶⁴ examines the concepts of flesh as rebellion and thirst as desiring God. He relates flesh to depravity and thirst to image bearing and discusses the conflict that occurs in humanity because of his sinfulness in spite of his resemblance to God. He believes maturity will elude the counselee unless he or she begins to depend on God. His word study of the Greek *sarx*, illumines that Paul’s intent was not the dualistic mindset of Greek philosophy. In contrast to the Greek *soma*, or body, the flesh is considered to be permanently antagonistic to the spirit. The flesh is the tendency to turn from God instead of toward God; it is not the physical body. He asserts that a biblical model of counseling must explore the individual’s attitude toward his body and also attend to the nonverbal signals expressed

³⁶⁴ Stephen D. Shores, “Image of God and the Flesh: An Exploration of the Image of God and the Flesh as the Basis for a Biblical Counseling Model,” (Doctoral diss. South Hamilton, MA: Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary, 1999).

through the body.

Biblical Worldview Studies

A biblical worldview is imperative if one is to have a Christian perspective of embodiment. George Barna's *Think Like Jesus*,³⁶⁵ provides insight into the mindset of many Christians and non-Christians in America in contrast to a Scripture-based view of life. In addition to the statistics generated by the research of the Barna Research Group regarding biblical worldviews, he writes about the importance of being totally committed to imitating Jesus Christ. He emphasizes making choices consistent with God's principles and commands.

In *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity*, Nancy Pearcey,³⁶⁶ writes about the need for an overarching framework for life and the how that need is met in a biblical worldview. Pearcey commends the work of Francis Schaeffer, summarizes his analysis of the ideas and their consequences within western culture, and presents a lens through which the Christian may see more clearly. She traces the infiltration of Greek dualisms of various forms into western thinking, particularly problematic within the history of the Church. One of her primary concerns is that of the division between the sacred and the secular that is apparent in the west today. She stresses that the objective truth of God is what Christians are commanded to convey through living redeemed lives, engaging the culture rather than retreating into privatized faith.

In the lecture entitled "Biblical Authority and Our Cultural Crisis: Cultural Relativism and the Emasculation of Truth," Ravi Zacharias³⁶⁷ considers the course of thought

³⁶⁵ George Barna, *Think Like Jesus: Make the Right Decision Every Time* (Brentwood, TN: Integrity Publishers, 2003).

³⁶⁶ Nancy R. Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004).

leading to the current culture in the west today. He discusses how revelation has been supplanted by reason, truth subverted by agnosticism, and the propositional replaced by the visual. He seeks to apply God's truth to the errors in thinking today.

The literature described in this chapter offers a wealth of insight for ministry to women in the present cultural context. Assessing the forces operating within consumerism, such as marketing and the media, is critical in order to identify and combat the aspects of a consumer culture that are contrary to the Christian faith. Recent psychological studies of women and historical research increase the depth of understanding concerning the impact of images in consumer culture on the identity of women. Theological, apologetic, and biblical worldview studies offer wisdom to counter the cultural influences with Christian truth.

³⁶⁷ Ravi Zacharias, speaker, "Biblical Authority and Our Cultural Crisis: Cultural Relativism and the Emasculation of Truth," (Atlanta, GA: Ravi Zacharias International Ministries, 1993).

Research Design

Chapter Four

Images and the Iron Maiden

The modern arsenal of the beauty myth is a dissemination of millions of images of the current ideal... The resulting hallucination materializes for women, as something all too real. No longer just an idea, it becomes three-dimensional, incorporating within itself how women live and how they do not live: It becomes the Iron Maiden. The original Iron Maiden was a medieval German instrument of torture, a body-shaped casket painted with the limbs and features of a lovely smiling young woman. The unlucky victim was slowly enclosed inside her; the lid fell shut to immobilize the victim, who died either of starvation or, less cruelly, of the metal spikes embedded in her interior. The modern hallucination in which women are trapped or trap themselves is similarly rigid, cruel, and euphemistically painted. Contemporary culture directs attention to imagery of the Iron Maiden, while censoring real women's faces and bodies...

The Church of Beauty is, like the Iron Maiden, a two-sided symbol. Women have embraced it eagerly from below as a means to fill the spiritual void that grew as their traditional relation to religious authority eroded. The social order imposes it as eagerly, to supplant religious authority as a policing force over women's lives...

The rightness and permanence of 'beauty's' caste system is... believed uncritically, as an article of faith... The 'truth' is seen in the way that God used to be... What has not yet been recognized is that the comparison should be no metaphor: The rituals of the beauty backlash do not simply echo traditional religions and cults but *functionally supplant them*... Where Mary had been 'blessed... among women,' and the Jewish man of Valor heard that 'her price is beyond rubies,' all the modern woman can hope to hear is that she looks divine.¹

¹ Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1991), 16, 17, 86, 87, 87, 88, 91.

During the 1984 graduation ceremony at Yale, the commencement speaker, a former Yale graduate who had become a television celebrity, dishonored women's bodies. He offered this story: "When he was at Yale there were no women. The women went to Vassar. There, they had nude photographs taken in gym class to check their posture. Some of the photos ended up in the pornography black market in New Haven. The punch line: The photos found no buyers." Naomi Wolf describes the experience: "Waiting for the parchment that honored our minds, we returned with reluctant confusion to our bodies, which we had just been told were worthless. Unable to sit still for the rest of the speeches unless we split our minds, being applauded, from our bodies, being derided, we did so... honor and derision at the same time from the same podium. We shifted in our seats. We paid the price asked of us. With moments like that to live through, the unreal-sounding statistics of women's eating diseases begin to come clear. A split like that makes one nauseous. The pride of our four years of hard work and struggle was snatched back from us at the moment we reached for it, and returned to us fouled." In Wolf, 213.

Partly in response to that graduation speech, Wolf wrote *The Beauty Myth*, a work that attributes political motive to be the generative power behind the beauty industry, a force that attempts to keep women captive to concern about appearances rather than allowing them to experience the fullness of

Do Christian women and girls internalize the meaning of the *imago Dei* or the images surrounding them in consumer culture? Which influences them more? Do they understand that their true identity is that of a worshipper of God being conformed to the image of Christ, reflecting back to Him His glory and representing Him on the earth?³⁶⁹ Do they understand that their bodies are places of worshipful service rather than merchandise in a marketplace?³⁷⁰

Survey Design

In order to ascertain the struggles that Christian women face regarding body issues in a consumer culture, the ministry project began with a survey given to college women representative of the years between adolescence and womanhood. The focus of the research and thesis-project is the impact of images in consumer culture on the identity of girls and women. One primary assumption is that in response to images in western culture, Christian women often are no different from their non-Christian counterparts due to lack of a biblical understanding of the body.³⁷¹ Thus, the parameters of the population narrow to include college women who are Christians serious enough about their spiritual formation to be attending a Christian organization on a college campus.

The survey is an attempt to listen to college women to discover the answers to the

socioeconomic liberation. She equates the beauty myth with the feminine mystique described by Betty Friedan in her 1963 work, both holding women hostage. Although this author disagrees with Wolf's assessment of the source and solution of the problem and identifies the origination of the problem as spiritual and the solution as conforming to the image of Christ versus any other image offered to women, Wolf's work is insightful.

³⁶⁹ God created humanity to live in integrated personhood of body and soul as His representatives on earth. In her speech entitled "Identity Crisis: Centrality of the Image of God to Relationships," Stephanie Hubach attempts to describe the mystery of the *imago Dei*: "Man images God in the essence of His character as expressed in God-given capacities." Although the effects of the Fall are universal, pervasive, and alienating, rendering man incapable of expressing His essence, the redemption Christ offers can reverse the effects of the Fall (II Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10-11).

³⁷⁰ The reader is referred to Chapter Two (pp. 36-77) for further discussion of a theology of the body.

³⁷¹ The general research in the area of girls and women dealing with body issues is discussed in Chapter One, (pp. 1-35).

following questions: Do Christian girls and women struggle with issues of embodiment in a western consumer society? Are the secular studies referenced in Chapter One descriptive of Christian women as well as non-Christian women? Do Christian women understand their bodies to be temples of the Living God intricately intertwined with their identities as worshippers? Or, are they tempted to believe that their bodies are commodities in a marketplace of consumption? Do Christian girls and women consider body issues to be relevant? Are they interested in thinking biblically about their bodies? Has the church addressed their emotional, intellectual, and physical issues in meaningful ways?

The quasi-quantitative survey was designed to inquire indirectly about the impact of images in consumer culture on the identity of Christian women.³⁷² Open-ended questions predominate in order to provoke thoughtful responses and prevent bias. The open-ended questions were deliberately designed to avoid suggestion. Instead of asking whether the women viewed themselves as consumers or worshippers and their bodies as temples or commodities, broader interrogatives probed these issues. These indirect inquiries were intended to promote honest reflection rather than pat answers. The three numerical rating questions were designed on a zero-to-ten scale in order to allow the participant the freedom to rate her response without the bias that descriptive words may have offered her. Likert-style categories for the numerical ratings were designed prior to analyzing the data.

³⁷² The reader is referred to Appendix B on p. 152 for a copy of the assessment instrument.

Procedure: Survey Distribution

In April of 2006 administrators for Campus Crusade for Christ,³⁷³ Reformed University Fellowship,³⁷⁴ and Campus Outreach³⁷⁵ advised the researcher to contact college Ministers directly by e-mail to request participation in the research. Reformed University Fellowship and Campus Outreach provided e-mail addresses for the ministers on their websites. Campus Crusade for Christ did not provide contact information. The Campus Crusade leader for the Boston metropolitan region consented to send the survey to the college ministers informing them of the research and requesting participation. The college ministers from Brown University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology responded to the e-mail and contacted the researcher. Both stated that October would be a better time for student participation. They requested that the researcher contact them in October. No other Campus Crusade minister from the Boston metropolitan region responded to the request.

In April of 2006 the researcher contacted the Campus Crusade college minister for Clemson University, to assess his willingness to invite the college women who attend Clemson's Campus Crusade chapter to participate in the research by completing a survey. He expressed his willingness to do so, but with the caveat that the students were studying for exams. He thought that the best response would be digital versus mailed paper copies.

³⁷³ Campus Crusade for Christ is a non-denominational evangelical college ministry launched by Bill and Vonette Bright in 1951 with the mission "to turn lost students into Christ-centered laborers." For further information about this ministry, the reader is referred to www.campuscrusade.com.

³⁷⁴ Reformed University Fellowship is a college ministry of the Presbyterian Church in America. The ministry is committed to aid the student in understanding and using the means of grace which God has provided for Christian growth, to the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ to the university community, to fellowship and service, and to a biblical world and life view. For further information about this ministry, the reader is referred to www.ruf.org.

³⁷⁵ Campus Outreach is a college ministry of the Presbyterian Church in America specifically to the smaller college campuses. It was founded in 1978 under Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama with the vision of training disciples of Jesus Christ to be laborers in a lost world. For more information about this ministry, the reader is referred to www.campusoutreach.org.

He sent the survey via e-mail attachment to the female students in leadership roles within Clemson's Campus Crusade group when they had finished their exams. Ten women responded to his request. They saved the attached survey to a Word document, completed it, and sent it directly to the researcher as instructed on the survey. Clemson's Campus Crusade minister referred the researcher to two other college ministers from East Tennessee State University and Western Kentucky University who also sent the survey by e-mail to the women in leadership as above. Both stated as did Clemson's Campus Crusade minister that the response rate may not be positive due to the time of year. Only two responded at this time, possibly because the students were involved in summer activities and employment.

Attempts to contact college ministers through e-mail during the summer months were unsuccessful. In September the researcher sent e-mails to every college minister and intern in the United States working with Reformed University Fellowship and Campus Outreach ministries requesting their participation in the research project. Several responded in September of 2006 and October of 2006, agreeing to send the survey to the college women attending their groups in late October or November of 2006.³⁷⁶

The Winthrop University Reformed University Fellowship minister offered to send the survey as well as to bring hard copies of the survey to the Reformed University Fellowship southeast fall conference in October of 2006 where students from Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina were in attendance. The Winthrop University intern for Reformed University Fellowship initiated contact with fellow interns in other areas of

³⁷⁶ The rationale for waiting until November to distribute the surveys was that the early weeks of the new year are dedicated to evangelism. The college ministers understood the researcher's request for participants to be Christian women who were committed to the campus ministry rather than those who might just be inquiring about the Christian faith.

the southeast, requesting their participation in distribution of the surveys via e-mail.

The researcher met with the Campus Crusade minister for the Charlotte, North Carolina region prior to his speaking during a November weekly meeting. He invited the women attending Winthrop University's group to stay after the meeting and complete hard copies of the surveys.

In October of 2006 the Campus Outreach ministers for the Charlotte, North Carolina, Birmingham, Alabama and Minnesota regions responded to the researcher's inquiry. The one in Charlotte requested hard copies for the women attending University of North Carolina's Charlotte campus. The ministers from Alabama and Minnesota thought that digital responses might be better than hard copies for their areas.

In November of 2006 the researcher contacted the minister from Presbyterian Student Organization³⁷⁷ for the upstate region of South Carolina. He contacted another campus minister in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Both ministers sent the surveys via e-mail to women who they knew to be Christians and who regularly attended this campus ministry.

Plans for Ministry in Response to Research Results

One hundred and two Christian college women responded to the survey.³⁷⁸ Quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data is recorded in Chapter Five. Assessment of the data revealed insights into the mindset of college women regarding the extent to which consumerism influences their identity and the images within consumerism affect their attitudes about their bodies. Discovery of their perceptions of whether or not the

³⁷⁷ Presbyterian Student Association is a ministry of the Presbyterian Church, United States of America denomination with the mission of helping students grow in joyful service of the Lord Jesus Christ. For further information about this ministry, the reader is referred to www.spartanburgpsa.org.

³⁷⁸ Surprisingly, the hard copies exceeded the digital copies with 59 hard copies and 43 digital ones. The majority of campus ministers assumed the digital response rate would be higher than the hard copy responses.

church has been a helpful resource to them in dealing with their bodily concerns and their interest in information from a biblical perspective on body issues challenged this author to persevere in planning for a specific ministry in response.

The insights gathered from this survey and precedent research are preparatory for a ministry project of designing a curriculum for classes and retreats and published materials to help women and girls begin to see themselves and their bodies with a biblical perspective. A theology of the body may prove helpful to women. It is important to see all of life through the lens of Scripture. A large part of living involves inhabiting physical bodies. Scripture addresses some issues of physical concern directly and some indirectly. Presenting a biblical perspective should help chisel away the impact of cultural images. Examination of the historical forces that shape the present may help women and girls to acknowledge the reality of the Fall and more fully embrace the beauty of redemption.

The intended target audience is girls and women from preteens to seniors. Reaching this audience will involve writing several different curricula for the varied life stages of these women. The indirect audience would be those for whom the issues that concern many Western women are superseded by thirst, hunger, nakedness, sickness, or imprisonment within prostitution. The goal would be to minister to those who are Christians to increase their awareness of those to whom the Body of Christ may extend His love in practical ways.

The ministry goal is ongoing classes with published material. Growth of the ministry may include book projects concerning physical health from a biblical worldview with the intent of attracting non-Christians as well as Christians. Serving the reader by addressing her physical concerns imitates Jesus Christ. He often addressed the physical and

spiritual needs simultaneously. A Christian perspective of bodily health tears down the lesser gods of consumerism including its identity theft and false images.

Chapter Five

Outcomes

What is the response of Christian women to indoctrinating images in consumer society? Do they inadvertently bow down to the images surrounding them? Do they see themselves as consumers or worshipers of God? Do they see their bodies as commodities or temples? Is the church serving them through addressing these issues or dismissing them as “hallucinations that all women can see”?³⁷⁹ The ministry project is an attempt to understand the extent to which the images within consumerism influence Christian women and to discover whether their church adequately addressed the issues that may be influencing Christian allegiance.

Survey Population and Demographics

One hundred and two Christian college women participated in an assessment instrument³⁸⁰ designed to increase the understanding of the impact of images in consumer culture on the identity of girls and women. These Christian women responded directly to the researcher via electronic mail on a digital survey or on a paper copy. Of the respondents all but four were in the 18-22 age category with most clustered at ages twenty and twenty-one. One respondent was seventeen, two were twenty-three, and one was twenty-four. The majority of women are Caucasian (ninety-nine), one is African

³⁷⁹ Wolf writes: “The Rites of Beauty are able to isolate women so well because it is not yet publicly recognized that devotees are trapped in something more serious than a fashion and more socially pervasive than a private distortion of self-image. The Rites are not yet described in terms of what they actually represent: a new fundamentalism transforming the secular West, repressive and doctrinaire as any Eastern counterpart... When other women do refer to it—self-deprecatingly, under their breath—they do so only as if to describe a hallucination that all women can see, rather than a concrete reality that no one acknowledges.” In Wolf, 89.

She defines the concrete reality as politically-motivated symbolic oppression of women, but this author sees the reality of the attempt to take men and women “captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8).

³⁸⁰ The survey may be located in Appendix B on p. 152.

American, one Indian American, and one of mixed race.

All of the women are single students attending undergraduate or graduate programs at colleges or universities in four major regions of the United States, with a majority in the Southeast: Anderson University, Appalachian University, Clemson University, Converse College, East Tennessee State University, Furman University, Georgia Southern University, Mississippi State University, North Carolina State University, University of Alabama, University of Georgia, and University of North Carolina. Some respondents study in the Northeast, pursuing degrees from Brown University, Lehigh University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, or Simmons College. Only one Midwestern school is represented in the sample, the University of Minnesota. Similarly, only one Southwestern school is represented in the sample, the University of Texas.

The parameters of the study population include Christian women who are involved in a Christian campus organization. This population was chosen for their commitment to spiritual formation through weekly gatherings and Bible study while on campus. The following table summarizes the sample representation by organization.

Table 1. Sample representation by organization

Campus Ministry	Number of respondents
Reformed University Fellowship	48
Campus Crusade for Christ	40
Campus Outreach	9
Presbyterian Student Union	5
TOTAL (N)	102

The average length of time that respondents had self-identified as Christians had a mean of eleven years, with the shortest length of Christian faith and practice being one

month and the longest being twenty-two years. Each participant gives testimony to the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ in her life. Forty-nine of the women specifically report coming to faith through the influence of a Christian home and church attendance. Twenty state their conversion to Christianity occurred in a church setting. Thus, at least sixty-eight percent of the women acknowledged Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in a church environment. Twelve women do not specify church or family but simply report a personal understanding of the Gospel. Seven women thank friends for leading them to faith, and one attributes her encounter with Christ to a faithful older woman. Four women report coming to the Christian faith through campus ministries, five through summer camps, and five through the arts or other means.

When asked how they nurture their Christian faith, the majority of the responses included personal and group Bible study, prayer, attending church, joining a campus ministry organization, and enjoying Christian friendships. Some women mentioned listening to Christian music, accountability with other Christians, and meditation and memorization of Scripture. One mentioned hearing the testimonies of others and another claiming truth even when it is not felt. One specifically mentioned sharing her faith, one mentioned serving, and one mentioned ministering. At least sixteen women are on a campus ministry leadership team,³⁸¹ three lead Bible studies, and three mention missions. One person works in her church nursery, another teaches children at her church. One mentions “making an effort to include God in all aspects of my life.” Twenty-six percent of the women associate some type of service with the nurture of Christian faith.

³⁸¹ The ministers for Campus Crusade for Christ on the campuses of Clemson University, East Tennessee State, and Western Kentucky University distributed the survey to the women on their leadership team only. Some of these women state that one of the ways they nurture their faith is through serving on the leadership team for their campus ministry. Others do not mention their service. In addition to these women, five other women report serving on a leadership team for Reformed University Fellowship.

Influence of Images on Identity

The first question inquires, “How do the images of women in the media (such as television, magazines, internet) influence you?” This question elicited several types of responses spanning these nine categories: the entanglement of images with identity; the objectification of the body; the comparison of the body to an ideal; the recognition of subconscious influences; the experience of frustrations; the impact of images on self-perception; the struggle between the cognitive and the emotive; the change in response to images with maturation; and the reference to God in relation to images. Specific quotes from each category are listed below.

1. The entanglement of images with identity:

I have struggled for a long time with my body image. Although I try to avoid looking and dwelling on these images, they really do have a major impact on me because they are constantly all around me. When I look at images of celebrities and people in the media, I immediately become dissatisfied with my body and wish I could change something to look more like these women. When I dwell on them, I begin believing that is true beauty and that how I look is not and can never be good enough.

They impact the way I feel about my body a lot. It seems impossible to get away from the ideal female body...It is hard to separate my self image from my body image.

2. The body perceived as an object for another's pleasure:

The body types, fashion styles, and demeanors of women in the public eye make me think that is the way I should look in order to please other people.

I think they give me the idea that you have to be thin and have a perfect body to be attractive and desirable.

Images of women in the media have a great impact on the way I feel about myself. Because society has all these ideals about what I should look like, I find that I can become very insecure about my body...The media forces women to be obsessed with their looks!

3. Comparison of the body to an ideal or standard:

They impact me greatly, because I am constantly comparing myself to them.

These images make me strive to be what I am not.

The images of women in the media make me as well as other women feel that no matter what we do, we will never be beautiful.

When I watch the media or see images in magazines, I immediately begin comparing myself to these images and eventually that comparison leads to unhealthy habits.

I try not to buy magazines, because the models make me feel insecure about my own body. If I look at a Victoria's Secret catalog, I see more bodies than clothing.

When I look at images for a while, I definitely start comparing my body to theirs. I know that sometimes when I feel like I'm gaining weight (even though I weigh 111 pounds) I get sad and in a bad mood.

I no longer read/even see those magazines. I used to let myself casually glance through them. Now, it takes a pretty enticing article to make me pick one up. They definitely don't make me feel good about myself. I used to compare my body to Sarah Michelle Gellar on Buffy and she was battling anorexia. Therefore, I strive to guard my mind.

Sometimes they cause me to think that my body is not perfect, thus causing an internal struggle of self-contempt. They also cause me to think that women on TV, magazines, and the internet can get flat stomachs and nice complexions, so what I am doing wrong?

4. The recognition of subconscious influences:³⁸²

I don't think I consciously think about it a lot, but I know that subconsciously it affects me. The images I see through the media have become the standard of what a woman is supposed to be... I know I often try to meet these standards without realizing it.

I have struggled throughout high school even up to this day with images presented to me through all different types of media. I used to associate physical beauty such as being thin, tan, flawless skin, etc. with being happy and having a fulfilling life. Subconsciously, I thought that I would not be successful in anything I would do when I got older unless I was fit and thin.

³⁸² The reader is referred to Chapter One of this thesis-project for discussion of the mindset of marketers, and, particularly, to the work of Gerald Zaltman, *How Customers Think: Essential Insights into the Mind of the Market* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2003).

5. The expression of frustration follows:

They frustrate me because they impose an impossible image of beauty.

It frustrates me in the fact that males see these women as beautiful when they do not understand they are coated with makeup and have had many 'enhancements' done to their bodies, including hair extensions. Males tend to compare college females to those portrayed in the media.

6. The impact of images on self-perception:

I don't have a large chest or perfect skin or great hair, but I've come to see these qualities as prerequisites to being considered beautiful. I just don't see myself as beautiful, and whenever my boyfriend tells me I am so, I have a hard time actually believing him."

I want to be a size 4 and toned even though my family, friends and boyfriend say I'm fine and beautiful.

Even though I am 6'0", size 6, and feel attractive, these images still make me feel like my body isn't as good as theirs.

7. The struggle of the cognitive and emotive:

They never make me feel depressed or anything, but sometimes I have to remember that inner beauty is what counts.

I'd say I have a poor body image and I am constantly comparing my body to TV, magazines, etc. but then again I've come to realize in baby steps that there is way more to a person than how they look in a bathing suit.

8. The change with maturation:

They used to bother me a lot more when I was younger; now I see how material and superficial and stressful it would be and is, so I am very glad that I'm not in the media nor do I feel the need to be.

They don't really affect me that much anymore. When I was younger, I used to think that the only really acceptable way to look is the way the women in the media look. And if you don't look like that, you just aren't doing something right. I don't really think that way anymore, though.

When I was growing up, I viewed the images of women as truth without question. I thought that the perfect woman was skinny, with blonde, straight, silky hair, with big boobs.

9. The reference to God in relation to images:

I've chosen to reject the ideas that the media has thrown at me, and try to learn to accept myself as God has created me.

I realize that God made me the way I am. I like to look at the pictures to look for ways to improve myself though.

The latter two quotes are the only two statements that refer to God in relation to images. These are the only two respondents out of one hundred and two women who noted the connection between the Creator and the images surrounding men and women in consumer culture. This suggests that the conflict between images in consumerism and faith may not yet be apparent to the majority of women responding to this survey. When describing the influence of images, eight women refer to them as “the standard.” Seven women refer to them as “the ideal.” Five refer to them as “perfect.” Two refer to them as “role models,” one as “example,” one as “norm,” and one as “truth.” Thus, twenty-five women refer to images as the unquestioned authority. Five note the unrealistic portrayal of women. Three note the subconscious influence of images. The interpenetration of images into the minds of these college women is evident.³⁸³

Further investigation of the answers to the first survey question reveals recurrent terms and themes. The terms “thin” or “skinny” occur twenty-five times, the phrase “ugly and fat” four times, and “old and ugly” one time. These women acquiesce to the culture’s

³⁸³ Elyse Fitzpatrick writes, “She may not even be aware of her basic beliefs (or worldview) and habits because they are often formed intuitively or instinctively. She is merely accustomed to relating to life in a certain way, and her beliefs and values are continuing to be shaped as she interacts with her environment, which she interprets through her unique heart.” In Elyse Fitzpatrick, “The Methods of Biblical Counseling,” in *Women Helping Women: A Biblical Guide to Major Issues Women Face*, general eds. Elyse Fitzpatrick and Carol Cornish (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1997), 39.

Carol Christ as cited in Kassian states, “Symbolic systems cannot simply be rejected; they must be replaced. Where there is no replacement the mind will revert to familiar structures at times of crisis, battlement, or defeat.” In Kassian, 186. The surrounding and interpenetrating images must be replaced with biblical truths about idolatry and about personhood. Cornish writes, “A worldview consists of the assumptions a person makes about what she sees and how she makes decisions. A biblical worldview equips women to see all of life (including herself) from God’s viewpoint.” In Carol Cornish, “The Essential Foundation: A Biblical View of Women,” in Fitzpatrick and Cornish, 60.

connection of beauty with youth and size. Three prominent themes emerge in the analysis of response to survey question one regarding the impact of images on Christian college women include negative emotions, stimulation of desires, and internal conflicts.

1. Negative emotions in response to images:

According to the women, images of women in the media elicit strong emotions, often stated, “I feel,” or “They make me feel”: *unattractive; undesirable; disheartened;*

discontent; dissatisfied; frustrated; guilty; jealous; envious; inadequate; sad;

disappointed; insecure; self-conscious; hopeless; inferior; wrong;

like I should be like them;

that true beauty is how I look;

like I can never be good enough;

fatter and uglier than I am;

unable to escape the pressure;

like I don't measure up;

like I should be that size, too;

like I need to be thinner and prettier or I will be rejected;

not good enough/pretty enough;

less than perfect;

like a hopeless case;

a little left behind;

motivated to exercise more and just be in better shape;

inspired to spend money or work out;

angry; and even numb.

Some of the descriptions above were used by more than one respondent. Several mentioned the emotions of insecurity and sadness. Many mentioned the sense of pressure to conform to the images around them.

2. Stimulation of desires in response to images:

The desires that result from exposure to images of women in the media are often expressed as “They make me want” or “I want”:

to be thin and beautiful;

to create the same image for myself;

to be thinner than I am;

to look thinner and have a firm stomach;

to look like the images;

a more ideal body;

clothes, jewelry, and cosmetics;

to look more fit;

a flat stomach and nice complexion;

to be more like the model;

to be skinny, tan, and beautiful;

and “*to be confident.*”

3. Internal conflicts in response to images:

The internal conflicts are evident in the following words or phrases: *struggle;*
obsess; strive; forced; fear; tempted; enticed;

must look like;

try to achieve;

trying to perfect;
standards impose;
impossible pursuit;
unrealistic standard of what women are supposed to be;
images play a larger role than I would like to admit;
constantly seeing skinny, perfect girls;
not beautiful because not perfect;
impossible ideal;
unreal, fake but work to achieve;
want to look like them, however I know that it is computerized.

Other frustrations include:

I am affected by other women's responses even if I am not watching television or reading magazines;
hard to separate self from body-image; always picturing them in my mind;
constantly comparing myself to the models; males compare unrealistic images to college girls;
associate physical beauty with happiness and having a fulfilling life;
compare self to the media images even though I know it is silly;
angry about how much society values the superficial; think about it more than I should;
construct an unhealthy body image in response; believe that the images are true beauty;
surrounded by perfect images;
the only acceptable way to look is the way the women in the media look;
make me feel like my body isn't as good as theirs even though I realize this not the way real women look;

create a standard I hold myself to; try not to look too hard;
far off from the ideal;
pressure to look like that although I know the images are unreal;
often trying to achieve the standard without even realizing it;
and know I won't age well like the stars.

One woman noted cognitive dissonance between *the world's view of beauty and God's view of beauty*. Many of the thoughtful answers suggest antagonism between the conscious and unconscious reactions to life in a world where images seek to rule. Painful awareness of the discrepancy between the perceived definition of external beauty and their own is evident. Also apparent is the motivation to connect that underlies the pursuit of physical perfection.

It appears that most respondents, consciously or subconsciously, equate thinness with acceptance and goodness with external beauty. Many, directly or indirectly, express the fear of rejection because of imperfect appearance, either due to size or age. To many of the women it appears that achieving the image is subconsciously linked with a fulfilling life.³⁸⁴ They seem to believe subconsciously that reaching the standard will foster the enrichment of relationships. It will give them the power to attract. They seem to associate success with size.

The overemphasis on the physical may overshadow relationships, though. Some reported unhealthy habits resulting from the reign of images, habits that may negatively

³⁸⁴ Lee-Thorp and Hicks write, "Humans tend to worship things that innately carry or offer power, such as wealth, the forces of nature, a woman's power to bear children, a man's power to make war, or physical beauty. If a beautiful woman represents Paradise lost, sexual fulfillment, and plenty of children, it is not surprising that men throughout history have put beautiful women on a pedestal as representations of the goddess of beauty. likewise, since beauty seems to promise women a husband, children, financial security, love, respect, and influence over others, it is no wonder women 'idolize' models who seem to embody beauty's power to give them what they crave." In Lee-Thorp and Hicks, 110.

impact the give and take required to establish and maintain relationships. It appears that appeasing the images leads to striving, a desire to escape their power, and even a loss of feeling. Many of the women reported confusion regarding self-perceptions and the opinions of their loved ones, relegating more authority to the images in shaping their beliefs about beauty, but clearly trying to please.

Description of the Ideal

In question two of the survey, the women were asked, “How would you describe the “ideal” female body? According to the women the ideal female body is slender, tall, fit and has a large bust, long legs, thin arms, a small waist, an hourglass figure, flawless skin, and beautiful hair and eyes. The most frequently cited in order include: *thin, toned, tall, buxom, small waist, flat stomach, hourglass shape, flawless skin, flat stomach, curves, great hair, a beautiful face, rounded, high buttocks, and thin, toned arms*. The majority of women used several of the above terms.

An example of the internalization of the objectification of the female body is this quote assuming the body to be more important than the face:

I would have to say one that is fit and thin. I think that well-toned muscles and a flat stomach and thin thighs would be ideal for me. The face and hair are not that important; I tend to focus more on what the body looks like.

An example of the recognition of the discrepancy between the actual and the ideal is:

It is ‘a size smaller’—slim, toned, and good-looking in hip-huggers or a bathing suit.

Only seven of the women wrestled with the received knowledge of the ideal. These examples demonstrate the difficult progression out of received knowledge:³⁸⁵

This question is hard for me because I feel like the ideal female body is misconstrued. Honestly, I would describe a very thin woman.

³⁸⁵ The reader is referred to Chapter One for the concept of women’s epistemology discussed by Mary Belenky and her colleagues in *Women’s Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind*.

The ideal projected by the media is not something that aligns with my personal ideal; I feel that the ideal body would be lean but strong and athletic.

The 'ideal' female body as portrayed by the media is thin, beautiful, with no imperfections. This body doesn't exist—like Barbie. My ideal body is real—with imperfections and everything.

Each person is built differently; There is no one 'ideal' figure.'

The 'ideal' woman is confident in her own skin.

Now I realize that the ideal female figure doesn't exist. It is a made-up thing. Every woman is different and every woman carries around a beauty inside of her. If she can come to grips with it, no matter what type of body she has, she will be radiant.

Only one of the women defined the ideal in relation to the Creator:

The ideal female body is the way God created her.

Thus, the majority of the women (ninety-five) described the ideal based on the images that surround them with no apparent questioning of the authority they grant it. Seven of the women attempt to deny the power of the images, and one turns toward the creational intent of God.

Emotional, Mental, and Physical Response to the Images

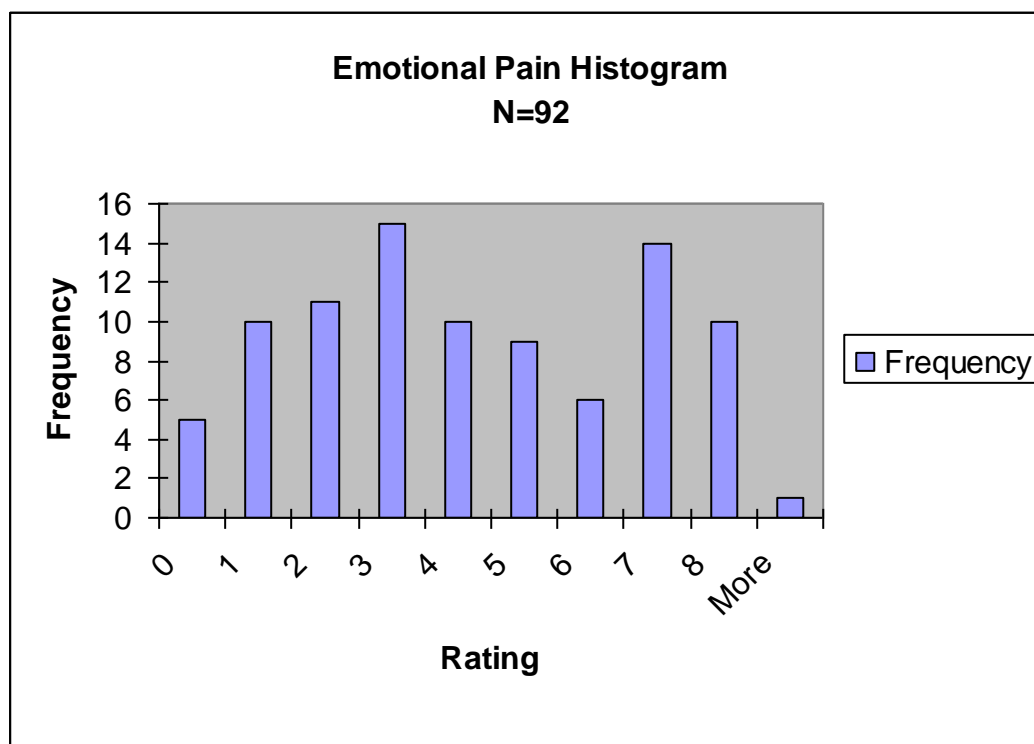
The next three questions on the survey deal with the experience of emotional pain, intellectual energy expense, and the extent of physical striving that occur in response to images in consumer culture. The women are asked to rate on a scale from zero-to-ten their feelings, time in thought, and time in physical work toward achieving the 'ideal' image of feminine beauty. The results suggest that the response of Christian college women to images in consumer society is one that is draining productive life from them.

Observations with any missing data were deleted, leaving a data set of ninety-two. There were no outliers in this compressed distribution of zero-to-ten. Quantitative analysis of the data for questions (variables) three through five included the mean and

standard deviation of each, linear regressions of the data for each question (variable) in relationship to the years that individual had self-identified as a Christian, and the correlation coefficients of each variable to the others as well as to years of self-identified Christianity.

The first of these variables is question three on the survey, “If you had to rate on a scale of zero-to-ten (with zero being no emotional discomfort and ten being extreme emotional pain), how would you rate the pain that you experience in response to seeing images of the ‘ideal’ female body?” The rating of emotional pain in response to images in consumer culture in this sample population of Christian college women has a mean of 4.23 with a standard deviation of 2.51.

Graph 1. Emotional response to images: Frequency of rating



The rating scale was converted to intensity cells by the researcher in order to categorize the data. The table below demonstrates the results for the ratings given by the women:

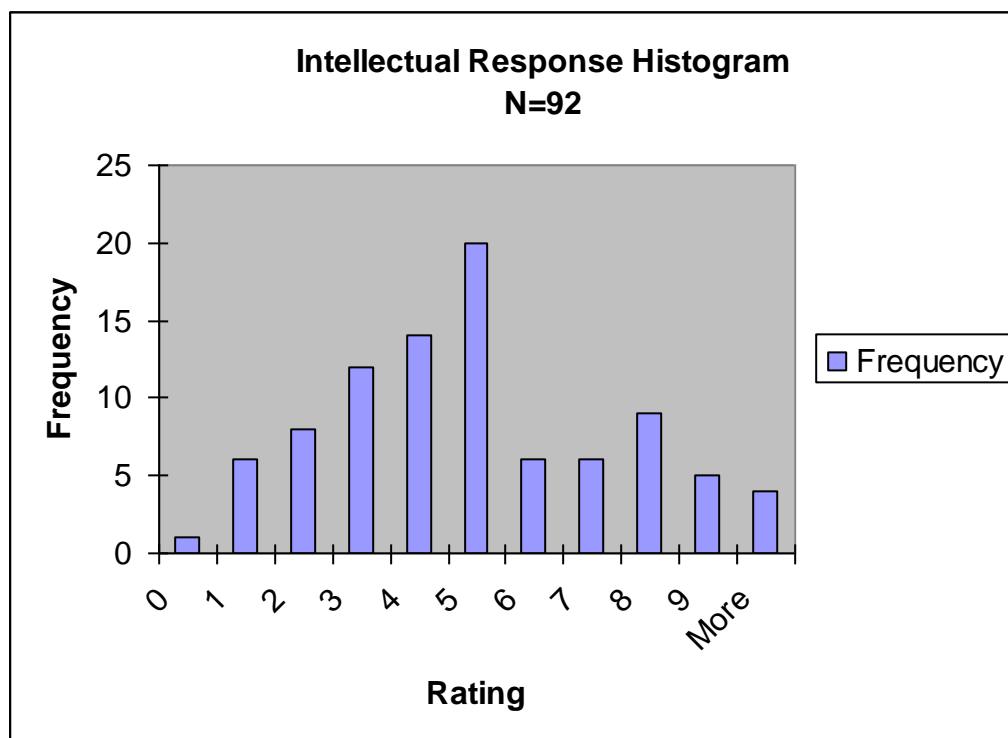
Table 2. Emotional response to images

Intensity of pain	Percent of women who rate emotional pain in this intensity
0=None	.06
1-3=Minimal	.39
4-6=Moderate	.28
7-10=Severe	.25
TOTAL (N) = 92	

The next item, number four on the survey, requests, "Please rate on a scale of zero-to-ten (with zero being none of the time and ten being most of the time) the amount of time you are thinking about your dissatisfaction or satisfaction with your body." The rating of intellectual expenditure on body issues among these Christian college women has a mean

of 4.93 with a standard deviation of 2.46.

Graph 2. Intellectual Response to Images: Frequency of Ratings



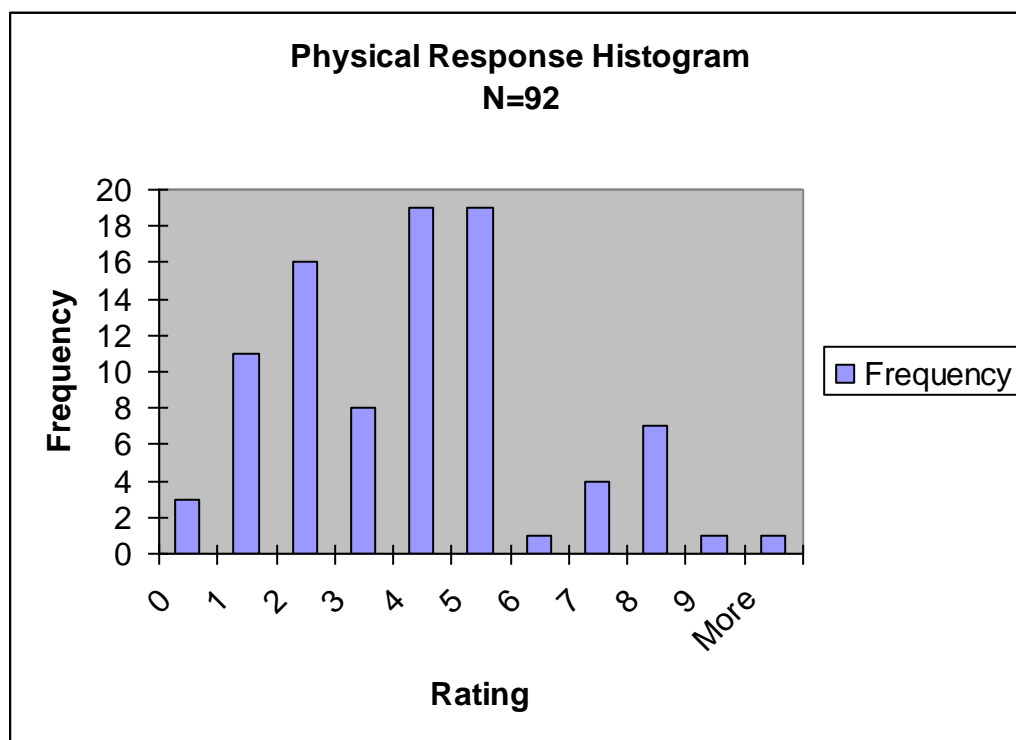
The following table demonstrates this data categorically:

Table 3. Intellectual energy expenditure on body issues

Amount of time	Percent of women who rate this amount of time
0-No time	.01
1-3=Minimal	.28
4-6=Moderate	.43
7-10=High	.26
TOTAL (N) = 92	

The final rating question, number five on the survey, invites the participant to rate on a scale of zero-to-ten “the amount of time you are working on your body to bring it closer to the ideal.” The rating of physical energy expenditure toward attaining the ideal female body among these Christian women had a mean of 3.91 with a standard deviation of 2.29.

Graph 3. Physical response to images: Frequency of rating



The following table shows the data according to categories:

Table 4. Physical energy expenditure toward the ideal

Amount of time	Percent of women who rate this amount of time
0=No time	.03
1-3=Minimal	.38
4-6=Moderate	.42
7-10=High	.15
TOTAL (N) = 92	

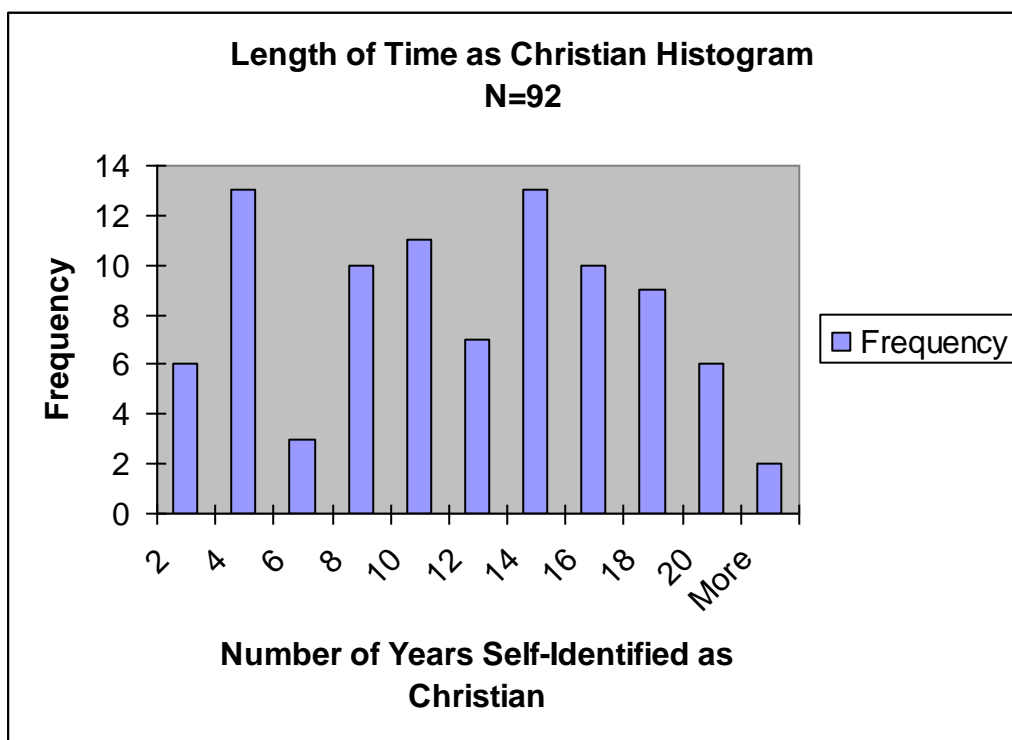
To summarize the above tables, the number of Christian women experiencing moderate to severe emotional pain in response to images in consumer culture is fifty-three percent. The number increases to sixty-nine percent when assessing moderate to high intellectual expenditure, and moderate to high physical energy expenditure is reported to be fifty-seven percent. Only two of the women reported that they exercise for the health benefit versus appearance concerns. The others did not mention any other

thought than that of striving toward the ideal female body as their motivation for physical activity.³⁸⁶

In order to determine if the length of time that the individual woman had self-identified as a Christian interacted in a linear way with the experience of emotional pain, intellectual energy, and physical energy expended in response to images in consumer culture, linear regressions were performed. The following scatter graphs display the data for questions (variables) three through five as they relate to length of time that the individual has self-identified as a Christian. The first histogram (Graph 4) demonstrates the self-identified years as a Christian on the horizontal axis and the number of women who claim that length of time in faith and practice on the vertical axis. The length of time these college women had self-identified as Christians has a mean of 11.05 with a standard deviation of 5.76.

³⁸⁶ The lack of insight into other rationale for exercise besides perfecting the physique aesthetically is concerning. The motive for physical activity matters. Silverstein (1988) as cited in Furnham, Badmin, and Snead found that exercise for weight control reasons was associated with disordered eating, and that those who exercise for appearance rather than health reasons are at risk for development of eating disorders. Furnham describes positive and negative reasons for exercise. There are strong indicators that positive motivations, such as health and fitness, are associated with less disturbance and greater self esteem. Positive reasons for physical activity were not associated with disordered eating. In Furnham and others, 581-596.

Graph 4. Length in years self-identified as Christian: Frequency of time periods



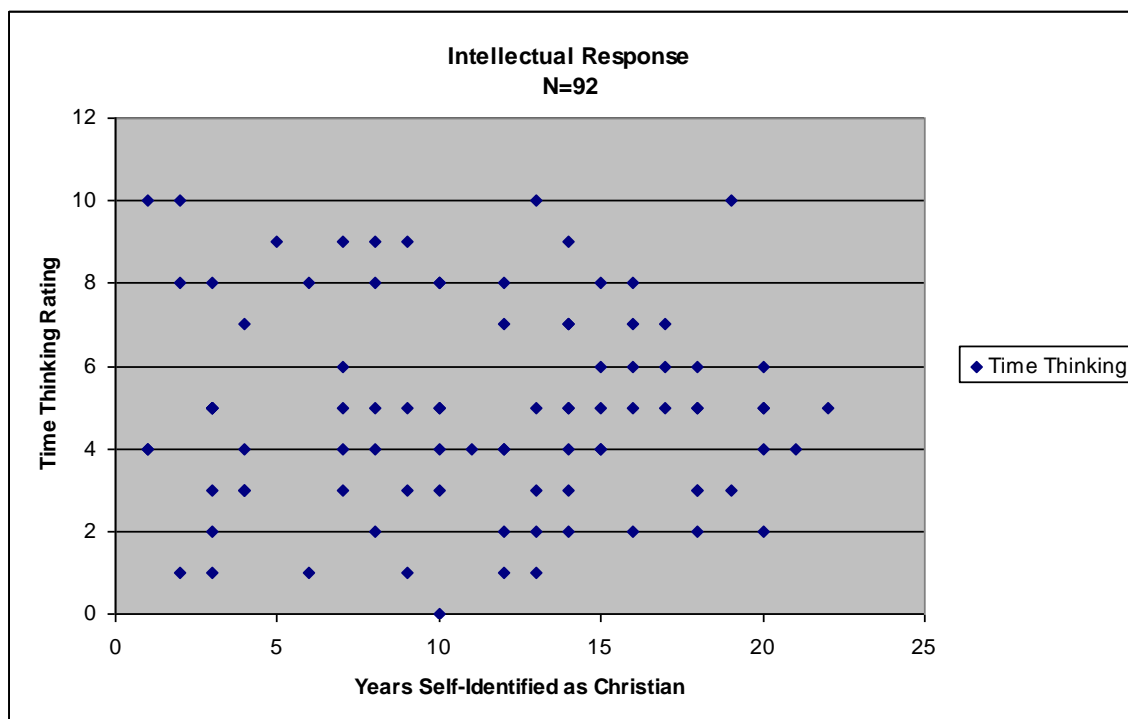
If the church were addressing the issues related to images in consumer culture, one might expect a linear relationship between the length of time in self-professed Christianity and response to images; therefore, the p-value might be lower than 0.05. The p-value for this linear regression comparing the rating of emotional response to length of time self-identified as a Christian is 0.43, implying that there is not a significant linear relationship between the two. The following scatter graph shows that there does not appear to be such a linear relationship between emotional pain in response to images in consumer culture and length of Christian faith and practice.

Graph 5. Emotional pain rating compared with length of years self-identified as Christian



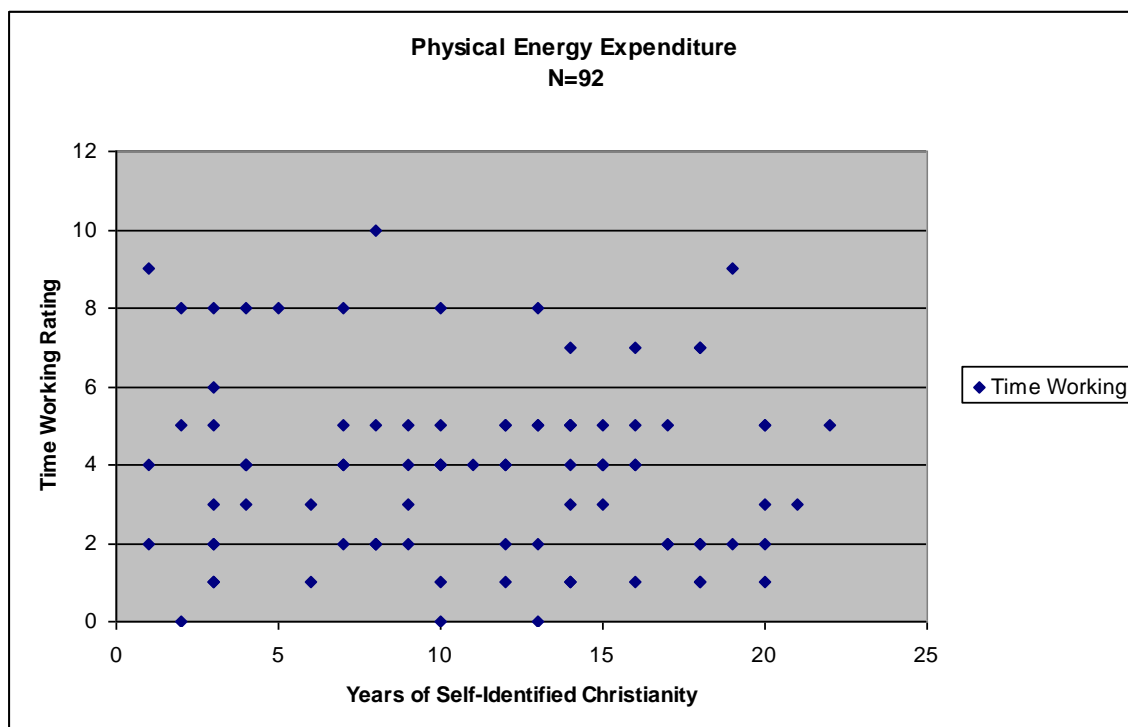
When comparing the intellectual variable to length of Christianity, the p-value is even higher, 0.81; again, suggesting no linear relationship between time thinking in response to surrounding images and length of time self-identified as a Christian. The following graph displays the data:

Graph 6. Intellectual response to images compared with length self-identified as Christian



The ratings of the amount of time physically working toward achieving the ideal physique in response to images in consumer culture do not have a linear relationship to length of time self-identified as Christian. The p-value for this comparison is 0.44, suggesting no significant linear relationship. The following scatter graph shows the data:

Graph 7. Physical work rating compared with length of years self-identified as a Christian



If the church were communicating with young women about the images surrounding them in life-changing ways, then graphs above might reveal diamonds closer to the zero range as the years self-identified as Christian increase. Thus, the impact of images in consumer culture on the identity of women and girls might decrease as years of self-identification as a Christian increase. The correlation coefficients for this data set of Christian college women are strongly tied to the p-values mentioned above.

The correlation coefficients are descriptive of the relationships between the variables themselves and between each variable to length of self-identification as Christian. The scale ranges from negative one-to-one, with one defined as perfectly related and negative one defined as inversely related. Examination of the correlation coefficients reveals that the variables (questions three through five) are significantly correlated. If a Christian college woman is experiencing pain in response to the images in consumer culture, she is

likely experiencing a similar amount of intellectual and physical striving. For example, the correlation coefficient for the pain rating with the time thinking rating is 0.65 and with time working physically rating is 0.54, both of these correlation coefficients suggesting a close relationship. The correlation coefficient for time thinking with time working is 0.63, again suggesting a close relationship between the intellectual and physical pursuits.

The correlation between the three variables (questions three through five) and the length of time self-identified as Christian raises a red flag for the church. The correlation coefficient relating each variable to length of self-identified practice of Christianity is concerning. The correlation coefficient for the variable of emotional pain to years of self-identified Christianity is -0.08 , suggesting that the two are not closely related. The correlation coefficient of physical energy expenditure with length of Christianity is similar, -0.08 . The correlation of intellectual energy expenditure with length of Christian faith and practice is -0.02 . The p-value for intellectual energy expenditure is 0.81, clearly rejecting a linear relationship. The intellectual variable is the closest to zero and has the largest p-value, implying that the time these college women spend thinking about the images surrounding them is not at all significantly related to how long they have been a Christian. This result begs the question of Christian education from a biblical perspective.

Influence of Images on Relationships with Men

Ninety-three women noted that their feelings about the female body negatively influenced their relationships with men. Eight of the women reported no negative impact. One did not answer this question.

These statements reveal the internalization of the idea that the female body is

merchandise to be exchanged for relationship:³⁸⁷

I feel that I am unworthy of a man sometimes, and feel that they may judge my personality/identity by appearance.

If I am not the ideal, then I will not experience a loving relationship with the opposite sex. In other words, beauty=intimacy.

It makes me feel as though I am not deserving of a boyfriend unless I'm as beautiful as I could be. It is like I have to reach the ideal before I can move forward in a relationship.

I want to hide my imperfections from them.

I feel unworthy of their time and care. I feel like they think I'm not 'marriage material.'

Lack of acceptance of the female body and the distrust it breeds between the sexes is evident in the following:

I have a hard time believing that men could be attracted to me so it makes me very suspicious and doubtful of their attention.

I often don't know why my boyfriend finds me attractive.

I feel very self-conscious, not because I think I don't have a nice body, but because I'm afraid of men looking at me only in a sexual way.

Three women reflected on the difference that the Christian mindset has made:

I used to like the attention that my body got from men, but when I became a Christian, I realized that men lust very easily and that I need to protect their minds.

I am about 140 pounds, size six to eight, and sometimes feel that being thinner would draw more attention from the guys, but trusting the Lord and finding my identity in Christ helps me find my worth through Christ and not in what guys may be thinking.

Sometimes I feel I'm not pretty enough, but then I remember who created me and that my heart and attitude are what are important.³⁸⁸

³⁸⁷ Wolf writes, "the beauty myth keeps a gap of fantasy between men and women. That gap is made with mirrors; no law of nature supports it. It keeps us spending vast sums of money and looking distractedly around us, but its smoke and reflection interfere with our freedom." In Wolf, 144.

³⁸⁸ For further responses from college women regarding the influence of their body image on their relationships with men, the reader is referred to Appendix C on p. 154.

Perceived Distinctions between Men and Women in Identification with the Body

Every respondent, except one who was “unsure,” agreed that men and women identify with their bodies in different ways. Each one agreed that both sexes are under the duress of the images surrounding them. But the feminine sex is more susceptible to insecurities due to her value being more closely tied to appearance, forty-five women say. Both strive in different ways to meet the standards of the images, but twenty-five women believe that women are under the greater pressure. Fifteen women note that women seek to be thin while men desire to gain weight in muscle. Several believe that the motivation for exercise for women is primarily to improve appearance while that of men is to increase production.

Some insightful comments are:

Women focus tons more on appearance in general; men receive affirmation in other ways.

Women are far more aware and critical of our bodies. In our culture, guys are supposed to have money and power, and women are supposed to look perfect. It's very connected with our worth.

Men worry about their bodies as it relates to work, while women relate to bodies as it relates to worth.

Men see their bodies as a tool for production and for strength. Women see their bodies as something to be looked upon; it is not what they do that makes them important.

Looks important to both but women are told they are what they appear.

Men are more worried about their body's performance...A woman ties her self-worth into how thin her body is.³⁸⁹

³⁸⁹ Further quotes from college women regarding differences in the way men and women identify with their bodies may be found in Appendix C on p. 156.

Support or Counsel for Body Issues

Where do women turn for counsel regarding body issues? The answers to, “If you have experienced frustrations in dealing with issues related to your body, where have you felt comfortable turning for support or advice?” reveal that thirty-two percent of the Christian women turned to their friends, and eighteen percent to their mothers. Ten women reported that they did not sense they had anywhere to turn for help, some of them stating that they had tried unsuccessfully. Eight women generally mentioned family, seven specified turning to sisters, five to prayer, four to the Bible, four to boyfriends, three turned to exercise, and three to counseling. Only four believed that this question was not applicable to them, implying that they had not experienced frustrations in issues related to embodiment. Six did not answer. Tellingly, one woman out of one hundred and two participants felt comfortable turning to her church.

Some of the comments follow:

I feel the most comfortable turning to someone who has been through or who is struggling in the same way that I am with my body. Females tend to understand more because they know more what it is like to struggle in such a way with self-image.

I turn to friends/peers going through similar things. One friend told me that she takes her glasses off when running so that she doesn't compare herself to other runners

I haven't really felt comfortable turning to anyone. Doctors I've asked haven't been helpful, and I don't really want to talk about my body frustrations because I'm embarrassed to have these feelings in the first place.” “I talk to my friends, particularly close Christian friends (my sisters in Christ). I have found that a lot of girls feel the same way about their bodies. [This woman rated her emotional pain in response to images a six and her intellectual energy expenditure an eight.]

I struggled with eating disorders for three years. I turned to counselors, friends, and other girls dealing with the same thing.

I am somewhat comfortable talking to my mother, because I know that she has struggled as well with these kinds of issues. But, on the other hand, it may be hard to talk to her because she was bulimic when she was my age and she sometimes makes

little comments about my weight/body.

Two women have discovered comfort in the recognition of their identity being in

Christ:

I have felt comfortable turning to my close friends who are oftentimes struggling with similar body image issues as I am. However, reading the Bible is the most reliable source that I can turn to when I begin to feel insecure because it reminds me of a solid basis for my self-worth, Jesus Christ. It reminds me that His love and promise of eternity does not change if I am thinner or if I gain weight. It also spurs me to value truth and other things above how I look or what I weigh.”

My relationship with Jesus Christ—I know that my identity is in Him and not the way I look. My discipler also helps me secure my confidence in my trust in the Lord.

Perceptions of the Church as a Resource

The data above suggest that the church has not been a comfortable place to deal with concerns about being in a body. The answers to the ninth question on the survey cannot be dismissed lightly. The following table displays the positive or negative answers to whether or not the church “has been a resource for you in answering questions about or dealing with body issues that have been a concern to you.” Has the church been a resource in dealing with body issues?

Table 6. Perceptions of the church as a resource for body issues

Positive or Negative Response	Number of Women
No, the church has not been a resource.	75
Yes, the church has been a resource.	24
Not applicable	1
Not answered	2
TOTAL (N)=102	

Statements regarding the need for the church to attend to body issues follow:

We don’t talk about it enough at ALL or even about how to encourage other girls with it. It is necessary because I see two of my three roommates feeling the weight of a need to be smaller from guys, moms, self.

It is not really addressed directly. I see women struggling with it and women thinking that they must be thin and doing what it takes to have that, but it is not really

addressed as a problem or concern

My church is very conservative and people do not tend to talk about emotional issues like insecurity I can't think of a time my church has helped me with body issues.

Too many women and girls at my church (I'd estimate near 75 percent) have an unhealthy body image and struggle to eat properly, either too much or too little. And with a few notable exceptions, the church doesn't know how to help them and generally ignores the issue.

It hasn't been a resource simply because youth pastors are men, and it is often difficult to form relationships with their wives if they have kids, etc.³⁹⁰

Analysis of the data for survey questions three through five regarding emotional pain, intellectual energy, and physical energy expenditure in response to images in consumer culture isolating the responses of the twenty-four women who reported that the church had been helpful demonstrates a mean rating of 4.33 for the emotional pain category, 5.16 for the intellectual energy category, and 3.75 for the physical energy category. Thus, these twenty-four women who felt that the church has been a helpful resource for them continued to experience moderate intensities of pain and effort toward attaining the ideals in consumer culture.

A similar examination of the data from survey questions three through five isolating the responses of the seventy-five women who reported that the church had not been helpful with regards to concerns they have had about their bodies in response to consumer culture reveal the same ratings, with means of 4.20, 4.95, and 3.93, and therefore, moderate pain and energy expense in response to the images surrounding them.

There is not much difference in response to images among women who reported that their church had been helpful and those who did not find the church helpful. This

³⁹⁰ For further comments about the perceived assistance of the church in issues concerning the body, the reader is referred to p. 157 of Appendix C. For further information concerning the responses of women when considering the helpfulness of other Christian organizations or publications regarding body issues, the reader is referred to p. 159 of Appendix C.

raises the question: Has the church offered a biblical perspective of the body, and, in particular, the female body, that combats the view of consumer culture?

Nineteen of the women who reported that the church had been helpful elaborated their affirmation with examples of those who had come alongside them in dealing with body concerns. Sixteen of the nineteen reported being helped specifically in church by: *my discipler, friends, a mentor, godly women, youth group, a Bible study leader..* Some offered phrases or sentences describing how they thought the church had been helpful:

helping me know that the body won't last

helping me accept myself

beautiful in God's eyes

A Sunday school teacher stressed that we honor God with our appearance.

It has helped in college, but not in earlier years when I needed it the most.

Analysis of the responses of these sixteen women to images in consumer society as rated on survey questions three through five raises the question as to whether their perceived help was indeed of assistance to them. The ratings of these women have means of 4.625 regarding emotional pain, 5.62 regarding intellectual energy, and 3.81 regarding physical energy.

Three respondents stand out from the others who reported the church had been a helpful resource. Two women mentioned that their church had taught them that their true identity is in Christ, and one mentioned that the church had taught her to respect her body. Analysis of the data of these three in response to survey questions three through five demonstrates a contrast from the above means. The ratings for questions three, four and five have means of 2.00, 2.33, and 2.66 among these respondents.

The biblical view of the person who trusts in Christ as a new creation in Him and the body of the Christian as a place of honor may indeed combat the assault of images in consumer culture. College women who were taught who they are in Christ and that the Christian's body is His temple demonstrate less pain taking away from loving others well and less energy expended upon unproductive intellectual and physical strivings. The impact of the truth is that it frees. The women who are thinking biblically about their bodies seem to be suffering less emotionally and are more free for productive pursuits.

Examination of Body Issues and Sexuality

In the west where images abound portraying a woman's body as an object to entice desire, it is important to ask these Christian women if anyone has encouraged them to examine body issues and set standards regarding sexuality. Sixty-three respondents affirmed that someone had encouraged them in this matter, thirty-seven denied any instruction in this area, and two did not answer.

Of the sixty-three women who had been encouraged to set standards regarding sexuality, thirty-four specified by whom. Eight of these thirty-four women state they received instruction from their parents. Only four explicitly credit their mothers for their education in this aspect of life.³⁹¹ Three received instruction on sexuality in a church setting prior to attending college, two through the public school, two through their counselors. Five report benefiting from discussions about sexuality in Christian campus organizations. Of particular note is that over one third of the total participants reported that no one had taught them about sexuality.

Interest in instruction on body issues from a biblical perspective

³⁹¹ The reader is referred to Appendix A (pp. 140-151) for a discussion of the recent historical setting as it relates to the dialogue between mothers and daughters.

The response to the question, “How interested would you be in a class for women about body issues from a biblical perspective?” was overwhelmingly positive. Ninety-four of the one hundred and two Christian college women affirmed interest in such a class, seven reported that they would not be very interested and one did not answer. Of the ninety-four who expressed interest in learning about body concerns from a biblical perspective, fifty-eight wrote that they would be “very interested,” often with exclamations, bold type, all capitals, underlining, repetition of “very,” or further descriptions about the need for such information.

The enthusiasm for education from a Christian view is evident:

I think it would be a valuable class, especially considering the trend of society. It would also be good to have the class available for junior high and high school females.

I would really love something like this and would have a lot of friends interested.

I think that would be very interesting. I never thought of the Bible being a place that even dealt with body issues.

Very interested. I've never learned about body issues from a biblical perspective.

VERY interested—this would be great for women (Christians and non-Christians). It would also be a great way to reach out to non-Christian women.

Consumerism and Christianity

The survey questions inquired indirectly about the conflict between consumerism and Christianity. Instead of asking whether the respondents identified themselves as consumers more so than Christians, the survey question posed the question, “If your life were represented by a circle and you had to fill in the percentage of time spent thinking about or participating in activities related to being a consumer and time spent thinking about or participating in activities related to being a worshiper, how much space would

each one fill? You may give the answer in percentages if you would like.” Ninety-five of the women answered this question answered this question in percentages. Of these ninety-five the percentage of time in consumerism as expressed in a mean was thirty-three percent. The mean percentage of time these women identified to be in worship was thirty-nine percent.

Four of the seven who did not supply percentages answered in words. Two reported equal amounts of consumerism and worship. One stated that consumerism would be the majority and worship the minority of her time. The fourth wrote, “Many things can be worship.”

When asked if they sensed tension between consumerism and Christianity, seventy-eight women answered “yes,” twenty-one answered “no,” and three did not answer.

Some comments regarding the tension between consumerism and the Christian faith include:

I think clothes and material blessings are from God. But thinking too much about what you want and need is pretty self-centered, and that is the opposite of worship to me.

Yes. Half of me wants to throw away the norm and work on pleasing God. Then I see the media and am distracted.

Yes-one is worldly, selfish, and self-serving; one is serving God and others.

Yes, although I had not thought about it before.

Not really, I try not to compartmentalize my life. Hopefully while I am being a consumer I am still being a worshipper.

Only three women reported that they considered themselves to be worshippers of God at all times.³⁹²

³⁹² To read more comments on the tension between consumerism and Christianity among these college women, please turn to p. 160 of Appendix C.

The responses of the seventy-eight who reported the perception of tension between consumerism and the Christian faith were isolated and analyzed. Percentages of consumerism and worship in those reporting sensed tension between consumerism and Christian faith and practice, the mean percentage of time self-identified in consumerism was thirty-nine percent. The mean percentage of time in worship was thirty-seven percent. Among these women, the practice of consumerism in terms of time exceeded the activities related to Christian faith and practice.

Percentages of consumerism and worship in the twenty-one women who reported no tension between consumerism and Christianity as expressed in means were fifteen percent of time in consumerism and forty-six percent of time in worship. It appears that those who state that they do not experience tension between consumerism and Christianity may not allocate as much time to consumer-related activities.

Analysis of the data for survey questions three through five considering responses to images in consumer culture isolating the two groups of those who report tension between consumerism and those who do not demonstrates similar numbers. Isolation of the seventy-eight who report experiencing tension between consumerism and Christianity and the twenty-one who do not sense a conflict demonstrates in both groups similar mean ratings of 4.64 (tension) and 4.20 (no tension) in the emotional pain and 4.31 (tension) and 4.00 (no tension) in the physical energy expenditure categories. These rating of four correspond with the moderate intensity category. The difference between the two groups is seen in the intellectual energy expenditure category in that those who do note tension have an intellectual energy expenditure rating of 5.52, whereas those who do not experience tension have a mean of 4.20 in the same category; however, both groups

are in the moderate intensity range.

Although they do not experience conflict between consumerism and Christianity, the women are surrounded by the images of consumer culture and experience similar pain and respond with similar effort to decrease the discrepancy between the ideal and the actual. There is a minimal difference in intellectual energy expense.

A further analysis of the data considering the group of participants who reported a percentage of time in consumerism greater than fifty percent demonstrates that these twenty-seven women have ratings in the emotional pain category of a mean of 4.62, the intellectual energy expenditure of a mean of 5.55, and the physical energy expenditure a mean of 3.96.

Twenty-four women reported a percentage of time greater than fifty percent in activities related to Christian faith and practice. Examination of the data for survey questions three through five regarding response to images in consumer culture for this group of participants demonstrates emotional pain ratings with a mean of 5.16, intellectual energy expenditure ratings with a mean of 5.20, and physical energy expenditure with a mean of 4.25. Thus, the response to images of those with high percentages of worship and those with high percentages of consumerism is similar.

The inundation with images influences both those who identify with the practice of consumerism to a greater degree than they do with the practice of Christianity and those who report greater time in activities related to their faith and practice. Could it be possible that the images are not recognized as a force with which to be reckoned? Their subtlety may be key source of their power (Genesis 3:1).³⁹³

³⁹³ “Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’” (Genesis 3:1).

Competition for Centrality in Life

The final question prior to inviting comments asked, “What would you say competes to occupy the center of your life?” Answers include: *appearance; body issues; boyfriends; control; dance; family; idolatry; internet; materialism; perfectionism; school; self; television; work; desire for romantic relationships; pleasing people; relationships with friends; the sin nature; worry about the future.*

Sixteen women stated that body image issues or concerns about appearance vie for centrality in their lives. Thirty-three women mentioned school prior to other concerns.

Concluding Comments from Participants

Prior to completing the survey, the final question invites them to provide additional feedback: “Do you have any other comments that you would like to share with me on the topic of Christian girls and body issues?” The consensus of their concluding comments is the import of the ministry project. One student in graduate school writes,

I think it is just as hard for Christians as for non-Christian women.

Others agree,

I think we are just as affected as non-Christians.

We suffer from distorted views of ourselves. We are influenced by the culture.

We all have them, and they manifest in different ways—I find that Christians think they shouldn’t struggle with this, so they try to hide it. If we were to be honest and share this commonality with one another, we could fight together, thus being more powerful and effective!

Christian girls are just as bad about body issues as the rest of the world. Although we will tell you our self worth rests in the Lord, when we look in the mirror, it is just as much a battleground to us as anyone else. Even more, I think because the Enemy wants us to struggle in any way we can and that is definitely a good way to get at a believer.

I think it is a huge issue among college girls.

I feel like it's almost taboo to talk about having body issues as a Christian, because there's the unspoken perception that having God in your life and having His unconditional love should be enough, and that it's prideful and self-centered and just silly to be concerned with something as superficial as one's weight. We're supposed to renounce the things of this world and focus on our life in heaven and not get bogged down worrying about a number on a scale. That is why a lot of times I feel like, at my women's Bible study, for example, I'm the only one with these thoughts and feelings of unhappiness with my body.

Well, I think that we struggle as much as the next girl when it comes to body issues. All girls want to be beautiful and treasured, but what we so often forget is that we already are. It is something that I know in my head, but it doesn't always make it to my heart.

The frequency of the reference to struggling in the comments above and those below is striking:

It is definitely a daily struggle; it just always sits in the back of my mind. I am not constantly worrying about it, but it is something I would love to be content in.

It is a struggle, for sure.

It is not talked about enough. Even the most unsuspecting girl struggles.

They aren't discussed as much as they should be, because body issues and sex are the things that girls deal with that are hardly ever discussed in church today, and for sure, every girl struggles with them.

Readiness for the church to provide assistance is expressed:

It is overlooked, and it is needed to address the issue, even in church adults.

Frequently poor body image and other body issues are symptoms of a deeper struggle.

When a person struggles with food, they are struggling spiritually and emotionally as well. I hope that the church will rise up and love these young women. God gives us the power to overcome these issues, 'He who is in us is greater than He who is in the

world.' We are subject to many pressures as women, but we fall when we listen to those pressures rather than God. He gives us the strength to resist and the grace to recover when we don't.

It would be beneficial to let girls know that most women deal with some sort of body issues. You may want to reiterate that our identity is in Christ, and that we have been set free from worldly ideals. What the world thinks is not the most important thing in our lives, and we should live as though we really believe this truth.

*Realness should be encouraged.*³⁹⁴

Discussion

The statements above give credence to the internal striving that exists in relation to the images in consumer culture. The phrase “live as though we really believe this truth” exemplifies the forces at work in consumer culture to combat Christianity and the battle for belief at this moment in the respondent’s life.

The results of the survey suggest that Christian women are often embattled within their bodies. They struggle as do their non-Christian counterparts with the impact of images in consumer culture on their identity. They sense a tension between what it means to be a consumer and all that it means to be a worshipper. They often live with division within themselves and between themselves and others rather than experiencing the integrated life existence offered only in Jesus Christ. They live this divided life, even as Christians, because they fail to recognize the impact of the images that surround them. They often do not realize they are giving their allegiance to images that cannot save. Thus, many are seeing with, not through, the eyes.³⁹⁵

Most admit to warfare within but do not seem to recognize that the battle involves their identity. Most do not see themselves as worshipers and their bodies as temples of

³⁹⁴ Lewis and Bridger in *The Soul of the New Consumer* discuss the quest for authenticity. This quote supports their findings that were discussed in Chapter One of this work.

³⁹⁵ The reader is referred to the poem by William Blake quoted on p. 18 of Chapter One of this thesis.

the living God. They are confused as the secular and sacred lines are drawn in culture and tempted to compartmentalize their lives. Most do not recognize that the fight will not be against the culture but within the culture living out a transformed life, a life that no longer assents to the images seeking to devour identity.

The intended product of this research is a book series for women and girls to counter the cultural images and the assumptions that they often incur with the good news of God's Word. The enthusiastic attitudes of the women participants intensified the passion to write on this topic with the guidance of Scripture. Because of the respondents' willingness to share intimate details and deep concerns, the researcher noted that a retreat format may be helpful in addition to publications.³⁹⁶ The results confirmed the need for a book to encourage meaningful dialogue between mothers and daughters on issues that are concerning to both.

Limitations of this research include a predominance of Caucasian women who are afforded the opportunity of higher education. Therefore, the results cannot be extrapolated to other races or educational levels without caution. The survey design deliberately approached some issues indirectly in order to avoid bias and encourage introspection. Instead of asking, "Do you see yourself as a consumer and your body as a commodity?" the survey investigated issues of identity in consumer culture through other means such as pain in response to images, time involvement, and tension between faith and consumerism. The qualitative method yields less hard data but richer insights for the ministry project of applying a biblical lens to the problems of body issues among women.

Recommendations for further research include attempts to broaden the demographics

³⁹⁶ The work of Belenky and her colleagues in *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind* supports the effectiveness of connected learning environments for women. For further reading on this topic, the reader is referred to Chapters 9 and 10, (pp. 190-229).

of the population to include a more diverse racial and socioeconomic representation. Specific studies for various age groups from preteens to seniors may provide data to enhance the information gleaned from this study. The researcher plans to design a curriculum with pre- and post-testing to determine its effectiveness prior to embarking on the journey of writing for publication.

Conclusion

An understanding of Scripture that includes God's creational intent, the implications of the Fall of humanity, the redeeming power of Jesus Christ, and the joyful hope of all things being summed up in Him (Ephesians 1:10) is eye-opening.³⁹⁷ Among other miracles, Jesus Christ raised a dead girl, healed a hemorrhaging woman, and gave sight to the blind. He continues His work, often through willing servants, today. The women who participated in this study expressed interest in learning about the body from a biblical perspective. If they are representative of others, the need for material to confront the images of consumerism in the Body of Christ is great. Hopefully, this material will enhance the Christian walk of some and lead others into awareness of the relevance of the reign of Jesus Christ for all of life.

Understanding that Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega (Revelation 1:8; Colossians 1:15-18), thus, that all of history is encapsulated in Him, allows for the uncovering of the uncomfortable aspects of history with the goal of not repeating what is not glorifying to Him.³⁹⁸ What aspects of history, including Church history, replicate the

³⁹⁷ "With a view to an administration, suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth" (Ephesians 1:10).

³⁹⁸ "'I am the Alpha and the Omega,' says the Lord God, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty'" (Revelation 1:8). "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together" (Colossians 1:15-17).

Fall of humanity rather than reveal following Christ?

In addition, It is important for women to come to terms with the fact that in a fallen world where their sex is afforded enmity with the evil one, (Genesis 3:15) he may tempt with the desire to be what he once was, “perfect in beauty” (Ezekiel 28:12).³⁹⁹ Jesus Christ prayed for His people to be fruitful in the world and to be kept from the evil one (John 15:5, 17:15).⁴⁰⁰ Turning to Him is turning to the source of beauty (Colossians 1:16).⁴⁰¹ Worshiping God in the beauty of His holiness (Psalm 96) in the body that He created, declared “very good,” (Genesis 1:31) and remakes His temple through faith in Jesus Christ, is life (Revelation 1:17-18; Ephesians 2:4-5).⁴⁰² The Christian’s identity is in Christ. The body of the Christian is His temple. The end result of worship is service (James 2:17).⁴⁰³ Men and women need to know the Word of God and use this sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17)⁴⁰⁴ to slice through the lies and live, not “as

³⁹⁹ “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel” (Genesis 3:15). “Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord God, ‘You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty’” (Ezekiel 28:12).

⁴⁰⁰ “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). “I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one” (John 17:15).

⁴⁰¹ The reader is referred to footnote 394 to read Colossians 1:16.

⁴⁰² The reader is referred to Chapter 2 for the discussion of the body becoming a temple of God through faith in Christ. Brand and Yancey write, “In biblical times the name defined the person. ‘Christian’ certainly defines us. We are made in the image of God. For us, the shell of skin and muscle and bones serves as a vessel, a repository for His image. We can comprehend and convey something of the Creator. Our cellular constructions of proteins arranged by DNA can become temples of the Holy Spirit...[God] is asking us to be the chief bearers of His likeness in the world. As spirit, He remains invisible on this planet. He relies on us to give flesh to that spirit, to bear the image of God.” In Paul Brand and Philip Yancey, *In His Image* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1984). “Splendor and majesty are before Him, strength and beauty are in His sanctuary” (Psalm 96:6) “God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day” (Genesis 1:31). “When I saw Him, I fell at my feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades’” (Revelation 1:17-18). “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)” (Ephesians 2:4-5).

⁴⁰³ “Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself” (James 2:17).

⁴⁰⁴ “And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:17).

though”⁴⁰⁵ they really believe it but live in the truth that will set them free from the erroneous claims of false images, free to serve productively in the kingdom of God.

⁴⁰⁵ One of the respondents stated, “What the world believes is not the most important thing in our lives, and we should live as though we really believe this truth.” The words “as though” support the observation by Simone de Beauvoir that many adolescent girls “stop being and start seeming.” Simone de Beauvoir as cited in Pipher, 22. Jesus Christ came to give abundant, overflowing life (John 10:10; 7:38). When His reign is clouded by the images of consumer culture—illusions—life wanes to pretension. When spiritual vision is not clear, holiness is missed and worship amiss.

Earth’s crammed with heaven,
 And every common bush afire with God;
 But only he who sees, takes off his shoes—
 The rest sit around it and pluck blackberries.—Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Appendix A

Recent Historical Setting

The Industrial Revolution (1740-1835) led to changes in relationships. These relational changes included domestic ones such as relationships between and within the sexes as well as those between the worker and the product. The Doctrine of Separate Spheres (1835) emerging from the cultural and economic consequences of the Industrial Revolution recognized the distinction between the public life and the private one, assigning the man's domain as the public and the woman's as the private. This two-sphere response triggered the identification of the woman as a consumer of products and the man as the producer.

A catalyst in the transition of women and girls from producing economic goods within the home to being consumers in the marketplace has been the technological advances in mass communications including publication and broadcasting media. The shift in roles has been accompanied by a change from a religious to a secular society. The impact of these forces is evident in communications between mothers and daughters concerning puberty and in the response of girls as they grow toward maturity in a female body.

The media explosion that began in the 1830s and accelerated throughout the century popularized contemporary feminine subject matter, elicited specifically female audiences, and induced new visual identities.⁴⁰⁶ With the advent of *Godey's Lady's Book*, media expanded from what had previously been confined to printed sermons, newspapers, and pamphlets. "Advertisements played their visual parts in the process of women evolving

⁴⁰⁶ Anne Higonnet, "Images—Appearances, Leisure, and Subsistence," in *A History of Women in the West, Volume IV: Emerging Feminism from Revolution to World War*, general eds. Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, eds. Genevieve Fraisse and Michelle Perrot, 258.

from working within the home to consumers spending outside it by reworking women's traditional self-images.⁴⁰⁷ By the turn of the century specialized advertising agencies entered the field with pictorial representation presented as education to consumers and manipulation of human behavior to their clients.⁴⁰⁸

Social scientists sought to explain human behavior in the fields of sociology, economy, political science, psychology, and anthropology. "Their findings and interpretations reverberated perhaps most effectively with respect to public consumption—in advertising."⁴⁰⁹ Two of the most prominent psychologists in the 1920s, John B. Watson and Floyd Allport, believed that the promise of psychology was to assist in adjustment to social norms. Advertisers proclaimed that a woman's efficient and proper care of the household could bring comfort and adjustment to her loved ones.⁴¹⁰ "New graphic and photographic techniques enabled advertising to become a visual medium with subliminal influence as never before, intentionally selling to women not only sales pitches for products but also images of themselves."⁴¹¹

By the 1920s advertisers took for granted that their craft had advanced beyond supplying information, to creating 'needs.'...Increasingly, advertising technique exploited psychological revelations of the irrational motives of behavior and employed symbolism and mental association pictorially, to set the emotions of the consumer to work to make the sale.⁴¹²

Advertising and marketing professionals referred to the customer as 'she.'

Countless publications of the 1920s cited the statistic that women made 80% of the

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 259.

⁴⁰⁸ Nancy Cott, "The Modern Woman and the 1920s, American Style," in *A History of Women in the West, Volume V: Toward a Cultural Identity in the Twentieth Century*, general eds. Georges Duby, and Michelle Perrot, ed. Francoise Thebaud (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996).

⁴⁰⁹ E.A. Purcell (1973) *The Crisis of Democratic Theory: Scientific Naturalism and the Problem of Value* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1973). Cited in *Ibid.*, 84.

⁴¹⁰ Cott in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume V*, 87.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 89.

⁴¹² A.M. McMahon, "An American Courtship: Psychologists and Advertising Theory in the Progressive Era, *American Studies* 13 no. 8, (1972): 3-8. In *Ibid.*, 88.

consumer purchases. Home economists welcomed the link and heralded consumption as the queen of the homemaker's tasks. 'Her most important work was that of director of family relations and family consumption.'⁴¹³

Advertising worked and reworked the theme that "purchasing was an arena of choice and control in which women could exert rationality and express values."⁴¹⁴

Marketers packaged modernity and individuality for women in commodity form, binding the psychological and cosmetic traits they promoted to a consumer identity. "According to the advertisements women were completely dependent on commercial products to accomplish household tasks, attract men, raise children, and win social acceptance."⁴¹⁵ "Of course, sex appeal was big business. By 1929 the cosmetic industry was spending about as much on advertising as was the food industry, which was seventeen times bigger."⁴¹⁶ According to Thebaud:

Women worried about failing to live up to new ideals of beauty, symbolized by impossibly slender film stars, models, and beauty queens... Advertisements sold images along with merchandise. The new woman might seem flashier than the old, but at the bottom, not much had changed, as advertising simultaneously turned women themselves into sexual objects, desirable commodities.⁴¹⁷

A girl's experience of the biological events of preadolescence and adolescence is shaped by the cultural and social setting in which she lives.

Every girl suffers from some kind of adolescent angst about her body; it is the historical moment that defines *how* she reacts to her changing flesh... Historical forces have made coming of age in a female body a different and more complex experience today than it was a century ago.⁴¹⁸

In the 20th century girls learned that modern femininity required some degree of

⁴¹³ C.G. Woodhouse, "The New Profession of Homemaking," *Survey* 57 no. 12 (1926): 339. In *Ibid.*, 89.

⁴¹⁴ Cott in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume V*, 89.

⁴¹⁵ Anne Higonnet, "Women, Images, and Representations," in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume V*, 354.

⁴¹⁶ Cott in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume V*, 89.

⁴¹⁷ Francoise Thebaud, "Exploration of Gender," in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume V*, 3.

⁴¹⁸ Brumberg, xviii.

exhibitionism. By the 1920s fashion and film had encouraged displaying more of the body. This new exposure of the body necessitated greater internal control of the body, an imperative that intensified by the end of the 20th century. “The seeds of this cultural and psychological change from external to internal control of the body lie in vast societal transformations that characterized the move from agrarian to industrial society, and from a religious to a secular world.”⁴¹⁹

Freud’s psychoanalysis dominated the early 1900s.⁴²⁰ By the 1920s, two hundred books about Freudianism had been published in America, and if the average student’s understanding of the subject was shallow, she picked up enough to be convinced that sex was the center of everything for women as well as men.⁴²¹ For philosophers following Marx and Freud, “libidinization is not only the *sine qua non* of freedom but freedom itself: Eros, in Marcuse’s terms, will give rise to a new civilization.”⁴²² In Jean Baudrillard’s view, generalized eroticization was by no means incompatible with a society of production and consumption.⁴²³ Margaret Sanger’s goal

was to construct a “scientific” approach to sexuality based squarely on Darwinism. Sanger portrayed the drama of history as a struggle to free our bodies and minds from the constraints of morality—what she called the “cruel morality of self-denial and sin.” She touted sexual liberation as “the only method” to find “inner peace and security and beauty.” She even offered it as a way to overcome social ills: “Remove the constraints and prohibitions which now hinder the release of inner energies [her euphemism for sexual energies], [and] most of the larger evils of society will perish... Finally, Sanger offered this sweeping messianic promise: “Through sex, mankind will attain the great spiritual illumination which will transform the world, and light up the only path to earthly paradise.”⁴²⁴

The mass culture supported the centrality of sexuality. An American mass culture

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁴²⁰ Cott in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume V*, 87.

⁴²¹ Collins, 334.

⁴²² Francoise Collin, “Philosophical Differences,” translated by Arthur Goldhammer, in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume V*, 275.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, 278.

⁴²⁴ Pearcey, 143.

began as production and marketing techniques joined with the radio and movies, newspapers and magazines. In the 1920s and 1930s surveys reported that movie stars had replaced leaders in politics and business as those most admired by young people. Standardization and uniformity of common life such as brand names, mail-order catalogs, and national chain stores offered mass-produced items. The installment plan was a specific factor in America's economic growth in the 1920s and a symbol of the new emphasis on consumption. The layaway plan of the 1920s through 1950s was the precursor to credit cards. Buying on credit fostered an increase in consumption habits and changed the focus from saving to spending. Producers and advertisers translated such purchases into heightening a family's "standard of living."⁴²⁵

Changes in the standard of living in the United States had an impact on the bodies of young girls, particularly those born into the expanding middle class.⁴²⁶ The broadening educational and professional opportunities with simultaneous narrowing of domestic chores affected relations between the sexes and within each sex. In the decades following 1940 the proportion of sixteen-year-old girls who held part-time jobs mushroomed, creating a lucrative market for products that girls could buy with their own money. "Filled with insecurity and anxious about their looks, young adolescents constitute a fertile market for almost any drug or cosmetic that promises perfection."⁴²⁷

According to Brumberg,

Commercial interests play directly to the body angst of young girls, a marketing strategy that results in enormous revenues for manufacturers of skin and hair products, as well as diet foods. Although elevated body angst is a great boost to corporate profits, it saps the creativity of girls and threatens their mental and physical health.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁵ Cott in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume V*, 77-78.

⁴²⁶ Brumberg, 6.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, 92.

As the baby boom generation reached adolescence, a child-like physical ideal gained a currency it has yet to lose. Its most perfect embodiment was the aptly nicknamed Twiggy. Twiggy produced an overnight sensation in 1967 at the age of 17 with her frail, waifish looks, managed and promoted by her boyfriend. For most adult women, a body like Twiggy's could only be approximated by means of extreme dietary self-discipline....Her sticklike figure, pale skin, and huge eyes defined the 60s look. While American teenagers had been obsessed with dieting long before Twiggy hit the magazine covers, her statement of the ideal of the era made it certain that virtually nobody was going to be happy with the shape of her body again...Weight loss became a modern feminine goal. Glorified as a prelude to all feminine success, a slender body-image haunts women throughout the Western world. 'A woman can never, the Duchess of Windsor is supposed to have said, 'be too rich or too thin.'⁴²⁹

Collins finds it ironic that in both the 1920s and 1960s and beyond, "most women had difficulty getting in proper shape for those liberating fashions."⁴³⁰

"Western culture has developed very few ways to represent women positively. Like Twiggy, who appealed aesthetically and sexually because she looked so vulnerable, the woman who would exert power of attraction must deny her agency, strength, or sufficiency."⁴³¹ Pornography exerted its harmful effects from the mid-1800s, but the rationale for lusting over a woman's body was expressed differently a century later. In the 1950s *Playboy* [magazine] made its appearance, warning that women are economic parasites and that marriage is a trap that will "crush man's adventurous, freedom-loving spirit."⁴³² From the second wave of feminism forward,

Feminists start with the premise that male-female relations are a form of power structure in which men dominate women. From this starting point they diverge over how and to what end that power structure should be abolished and what becomes of sexual difference once liberated from its social and historical dimensions.⁴³³

According to Higonnet, "Perceptions of sexuality are linked to signs of power, both

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, xxiii.

⁴²⁹ Higonnet in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume V*, 379.

⁴³⁰ Collins, 423.

⁴³¹ Higonnet in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume V*, 378.

⁴³² Pearcey, *Total Truth*, 340.

⁴³³ Collin in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume V*, 290.

exerted and submitted.”⁴³⁴

The Industrial Revolution, changes in lifestyle and standard of living produced by a consumer society, and the (power plays within the) sexual revolution contributed to confusion in the dialogue between mothers and daughters. Eventually, “mothers no longer had a clear sense of what they were expected to pass on.”⁴³⁵ Mary Virginia Hawes Terhune, a Christian matron, criticized the “mistaken modesty” about the body which generations of American women had practiced. “By all accounts the mother-daughter dialogue was a painful process characterized by great awkwardness and pervasive maternal reserve.”⁴³⁶

Brumberg sees the changes in the relationship between mothers and daughters reflected in the commercialization of menstruation. In the 1920s magazines began to advertise Kotex. These early advertisements by Kimberly-Clark targeted the anxiety of mothers initiating conversation regarding menstruation and were signed by a registered nurse who invited correspondence and offered free samples to be sent in an unmarked wrapper.⁴³⁷ In the 1930s and 1940s educational divisions within the sanitary napkin industry offered programs of instruction and an animated film, *The Story of Menstruation*, in conjunction with Walt Disney.⁴³⁸ After World War II, in the late 1940s and 1950s, mothers were deleted from advertisements for sanitary products. According to Brumberg, the absence of the mother was “to encourage autonomous consumption by teenage girls.”⁴³⁹ In addition to autonomy, the

⁴³⁴ Higonnet in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume V*, 387.

⁴³⁵ Yvonne Knibiehler, “Bodies and Hearts,” translated by Arthur Goldhammer, in Duby and Perrot, *A History of Women in the West, Volume IV*, 355.

⁴³⁶ Brumberg, 15.

⁴³⁷ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*, 48.

advertisements stimulated angst by acknowledging the awkwardness in the social circumstances surrounding menstruation and led the consumer to believe that the best brand would provide insurance against the embarrassment of soiled clothing. “Marketing strategists understood that sales to baby-boom generation...could turn menstrual blood into gold.”⁴⁴⁰ They have been effective. As a result, “When they start menstruating, modern girls routinely reach for a sanitary napkin even before they reach for their mothers.”⁴⁴¹

The marketing has impacted mothers as well. The contemporary discussion of menstruation stresses personal hygiene to the extent that, “Clinical studies demonstrate that in the United States both pre- and post-menarcheal girls regard menarche as a hygienic crisis rather than a maturational event.”⁴⁴²

Instead of seeing menarche as a marker of important change in a girl—specifically, her new capacity for reproduction—modern mothers typically stress the importance of outside appearances for their daughters: keeping clean, avoiding soiled clothes, and purchasing the right ‘equipment.’ Hygiene, not sexuality, is the focus of most maternal discussions with girls who have just started their periods.⁴⁴³

Maternal advice centering on the hygiene rather than fertility “encouraged the idea that menarche was a matter of consumer decision-making and that coming-of-age was a process to be worked out in the marketplace rather than in the home.”⁴⁴⁴ Brumberg laments that, for American girls, coming of age “is acted out in purchases—such as bras, lipsticks, and high heels, or ‘grown-up’ privileges such as ear piercing...In the twentieth century, menarche has become more of an economic ritual than a social one.”⁴⁴⁵

⁴⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁴⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁴⁴² Whisart and Zegans (1975) cited in Brumberg, 32.

⁴⁴³ Brumberg, 29-30.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 33, 32.

When American girls start to menstruate, they think of a product rather than reproduction. This modern disconnection between menstruation and reproduction

has important psychological implications for how girls think about themselves and what kind of women they become...It sets the stage for obsessive over attention to other aspects of the changing body, such as size or shape. In an environment like ours, where looks mean so much, this turning away from the hidden aspects of female biology has put excruciating pressure on those body parts that the world can see. For girls in the 20th century, this reorientation toward the visual, or the outside of the body, has only intensified the difficulties of being an adolescent.⁴⁴⁶

Unfortunately, “Menarche today is just another step that moves girls deeper into a consumer culture that seduces them into thinking that the body and sexual expression are their most important projects.”⁴⁴⁷

Brumberg states that in the last century “The body has become the central project of American girls.”⁴⁴⁸ Although adolescence in the past and present may be characterized by self-consciousness, peer sensitivity, and establishment of identity, before the 20th century, girls did not organize their thoughts around the appearance of their bodies.⁴⁴⁹ “As young women became more independent from their mothers and more knowledgeable about the world, their self-esteem began to have more to do with external attributes than the inner qualities, such as strength of character or generosity of spirit.”⁴⁵⁰ The media and fashion industry have given primacy to a woman’s visual image and young girls have increasingly attended to the external.

At the end of the 20th century the body is regarded as something to be managed and maintained, usually through expenditures on clothes and personal grooming items, with special attention to exterior surfaces...skin, hair, and contours. In adolescent girls’ private diaries and journals, the body is a consistent preoccupation, second only to peer relationships.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁴⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁴⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 100.

Brumberg's research regarding the diaries of young girls "demonstrated the intuition that femininity required the display of oneself as a decorative object."⁴⁵²

Young girls in the "century of svelte" have become extremely vulnerable to messages about dieting and body parts.⁴⁵³ In the 1920s dieting was a "fashionable game not a way of life as it is from women and girls at the end of the 20th century."⁴⁵⁴ The preoccupation with weight is persistent, often begins at age nine or ten, and characterizes the teen years of most middle-class girls. According to Brumberg, concerns about the body underlie teen girls' struggles with identity, peer relationships, and educational as well as occupational choices.⁴⁵⁵ Before the 1980s, weight was the primary concern, more than a lean, toned body.⁴⁵⁶ The new national infatuation with "hard bodies" plus the airbrushed and camera angled emphasis on visual perfection, increases the pressure that adolescents feel as they mature. "Today, most adolescent girls control their body from within, through diet and exercise, rather than externally, with corsets or girdles."⁴⁵⁷

An important determinant of psychological well-being in today's culture is the view that a person has of the terrain of her body. The importance placed upon "body-cathexis scales" in psychological assessment in America reveals the deep connection between an individual's sense of self and her level of satisfaction with different parts of her body.

This sad reality needs to be factored into our understanding of girls and the way in which they develop their sense of self...Fear of fat, anxiety about body parts, and expectations of perfection in the dressing room have all coalesced to make 'I hate my body' into a powerful mantra that informs the social and spiritual life of too many American girls.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, xxi.

⁴⁵² *Ibid.*, 107.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid.*, 107.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 110.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 110.

⁴⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 110.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 123.

Brumberg is astounded by the need to “strictly police their bodies” among Ivy League females.⁴⁵⁹ She states that in her class discussions she has been struck by the confusion that her college students felt.

On the one hand, their parents and teachers had told them that being female was no bar to accomplishment. Yet girls of their generation learned from a very early age that the power of their gender was tied to what they looked like—and how ‘sexy’ they were—rather than to character and achievement. Because of the visual image they had absorbed since they were toddlers, they invariably wanted to be thinner, a desire that motivated them to expend an enormous amount of time and energy controlling the appetite and working on their bodies, all the while thinking about food. Although they were aware that diet and exercise regimens could be obsessive and lead to eating disorders, in their own lives they walked a narrow line between the normal and the pathological. Almost all of them admitted they did battle on a daily basis with what therapists in the eating disorder world call ‘bad body fever,’ a continuous internal commentary that constitutes a powerful form of self-punishment...Marketers recognize these anxieties and play them to the hilt.⁴⁶⁰

Brumberg shares,

My students were exquisitely sensitive to the cultural pressures surrounding them. They understood that their relationship to food and the body had been shaped by what they saw as little girls on television, at the movies, and in advertising...I had really little to teach them about what it means to live in a culture of unrelenting objectification where women’s bodies are used to sell everything...By their own admission, the environment of slick images and quick seduction shapes their desires, and their sense of self, even if they try to resist.⁴⁶¹

Brumberg reports that “girls today make the body into an all-consuming project in ways young women in the past did not.”⁴⁶² She states,

There is an important difference between the past and the present when it comes to the level of social support for the adolescent girl’s preoccupation with her body. Beauty imperatives for girls in the 19th century were kept in check by consideration of moral character...19th-century girls often noted in diaries when they acquired an exciting personal embellishment, such as a hair ribbon or new dress, but these were not linked to self-worth or personhood in quite the ways they are today....Many

⁴⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 126, 130.

⁴⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, xxiii.

⁴⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 190.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 209, 196.

⁴⁶² *Ibid.*, xvii.

parents tried to limit their daughters' interest in superficial things, such as hairdos, dresses, or size of their waists, because character was considered more important than beauty by both parents and the community. And character was built on attention to self-control, service to others, and belief in God—not on attention to one's own, highly individualistic body project.”⁴⁶³

The changes in the priorities of western culture in recent history have left an impression on girls and women that they are not fully able to express. Brumberg concludes:

Over the course of the 20th century, girls' bodies have been a critical index of our social and economic life, in ways that we are just beginning to understand. The rise of scientific medicine, the decline of parental and community supervision, the triumph of visual consumer culture, and the changing nature of intimacy in our society are all encoded in their youthful flesh, and in the social problems they now face. Although evolution in fashion is part of this story, there is more at stake here than simply changing hemlines or bustlines.⁴⁶⁴

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, xx.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 213.

Appendix B

The Research Questionnaire

Will you please consider aiding me in my quest to understand what college women are dealing with concerning body issues? My name is Joy Hicklin, and I am a Doctor of Ministry student at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in South Hamilton, Massachusetts. This survey is part of my preliminary research, and the results may be published in a thesis project. Several other college campuses are participating in this survey as well. It will be extremely helpful to me if you will be open and honest as you reflect upon and answer each question. Thank you in advance for your participation.

1. How do the images of women in the media (such as TV, magazines, internet) influence you?
2. How would you describe the “ideal” female body?
3. If you had to rate your feelings on a 0-10 scale (with 0 being no emotional discomfort and 10 being extreme emotional pain), how would you rate the pain that you experience in response to seeing images of the “ideal” female body?
4. Please rate on a scale of 0-10 (with 0 being none of the time and 10 being most of the time) the amount of time that you are thinking about your dissatisfaction with your body.
5. Please rate on a scale of 0-10 (with 0 being none of the time and 10 being most of the time) the amount of time that you are working on your body in order to bring it closer to the ideal.
6. In what ways do your feelings about the female body impact your relationships with men?
7. Do you think that men and women identify with their bodies in different ways? Why or why not?
8. If you have experienced frustrations in dealing with issues related to your body, where have you felt comfortable turning for support or advice?

9. In what ways has your church been or not been a resource for you in answering questions about or dealing with body issues that have been a concern to you?
10. Have you found any Christian organization/publication helpful regarding the topic of body issues? If so, could you please mention the organization/publication and describe its positive impact?
11. Has anyone encouraged you to examine body issues and/or set standards related to your sexual nature?
12. How interested would you be in a class for women about body issues from a biblical perspective?
13. How much of your time is your mindset that of a consumer (shopping, watching TV, thinking about what you would like to buy, reading magazines, surfing the internet)?
14. How often is your frame of mind that of a worshipper (praying, being with other believers, sharing your faith, participating in Bible study, singing, serving)?
15. If your life were represented by a circle and you had to fill in the percentage of time spent thinking about or participating in activities related to being a consumer and time spent thinking about or participating in activities related to being a worshipper, how much space would each one fill? You may give your answer in percentages if you would like.
16. Do you sense a tension between the two?
17. If you are a Christian, how did you become a Christian?
18. How do you nurture your Christian life now?
19. What would you say competes to occupy the center of your life?
20. Do you have any other comments that you would like to share with me on the topic of Christian girls and body issues?

Will you please complete the information below:

Your age_____

Race_____

College you are attending_____

If you are a Christian, how long have you been a Christian _____

Denomination or Christian Group Association_____

Appendix C

Further Quotes from the Research Arranged Topically

The Influence of Feelings about the Female Body on Relationships with Men

In response to the question, “In what ways do your feelings about the female body affect your relationships with men?” ninety-three women stated that their feelings about their bodies negatively influenced their relationships with men. Eight reported that their feelings did not have a negative impact. One did not answer.

These statements reveal the internalization of the idea that the female body is merchandise:

Although I know this isn't true, I often feel that my looks are all I've got in terms of gaining admiration and approval from men, and that external beauty is as far as they can see. Therefore, I sometimes feel that in order to gain a man's respect and approval, he must first think that I am beautiful.

I want to look good to impress them.

If I am not thin and beautiful, guys aren't going to ask me out.

I do sometimes think, 'If only I were a size 4, then all the guys would like me.'

I feel that men would not be attracted to me as I am now.

It has come to my attention that women feel they need to improve for men more than men need to improve for women. It really hurts me to see people commenting on the way their girlfriends look. Two examples include a guy who told his girlfriend that he wanted to buy her a nose job as a graduation gift and another is a friend of mine who was told she was obese (and she's not) by her boyfriend and he wanted her to eat less and workout everyday. It hurts to see women being treated like this, especially when they are such terrific people on the inside and they don't deserve it.

Lack of acceptance of the female body and the distrust it breeds between the sexes is evident in the following:

I have found that usually when I am struggling with my self-image physically, I tend to struggle with my fiancé. I have a hard time believing that he really thinks I am beautiful, because I don't think of myself as being beautiful. It varies though

depending on how I feel about my body...Now, in reality, I know that he really does think that I am beautiful, but I have a hard time actually believing it when I am struggling and dwelling on my dissatisfaction with my body.

I am constantly wondering if I am too big for certain guys and compare my figure to other people they have dated and so forth. It is definitely something that is an obsession I don't like.

I am always insecure about what I wear and how it makes me look and feel.

Positive or negative attention with my boyfriend, to me, means looking great versus looking bad—I feel his love is dependent on how I look.

Sometimes it makes me feel like I could never completely satisfy a man with my body and that my husband will be showing me grace to see me naked and enjoy it.

I feel like they would never choose me over other women, and that brings my self-esteem down, which makes me less attractive to guys—it's a vicious cycle.

My body is like my best friend and worst enemy. There are days when I love my body and there are always parts of my body that I like or enjoy working on, but at the same time there are definitely days where I hate almost everything about myself. Sometimes my body makes me feel confident and assertive, and other times I'd rather crawl into a hole and die then let anyone see me...

It lowers my self-esteem a bit because I feel like a lot of men are expecting this ideal girl. While this may not always be true, the comments heard from guys on either 'ideal' girls or girls they don't find attractive does add pressure. However, if I found someone who was genuinely interested in me, I'm usually more concerned on trying to find ways to get to know than in than impressing them with my appearance. If I'm just out and there are stranger guys around I will tend to be more self-conscious because any interaction would be based solely on looks, and I would feel like I wasn't good enough to be checked out.

I often feel that I would have a great body if only I were skinny. When I feel good about my body, I am confident around men. When I am feeling fat, I am reluctant to initiate conversation at all—many times I will even avoid eye contact with men on the street, in class, or in social settings. Also, when I do feel good about my body, I am still intimidated, because I feel like men are looking at my chest or lusting in general.

The following statements reveal attempts to change thought processes:

For a time, I felt more comfortable talking to men if I felt physically attractive. I have made it a point to not find my confidence in how I look, and so this does not apply

nearly as much anymore. But my appearance crosses my mind many times when I am around men.

I want the perfect female body for myself...not for my man. The man should like you the way you are.

Since I am in a transitional period where I am learning a lot more about relationships between men and women I feel torn about whether to talk about my old or new way of thinking. I would like to implement my new way of thinking, so I guess I would say that the more satisfied with your image, including your body, the more confident and the more responsible in the choices you make in relationships will be.

I am an engineering student, so I want to make sure my body image is distinct from men. When I first came to MIT, I wanted to wear pink a lot. I think most men know that the average woman doesn't look like a model, and good men are able to recognize inner beauty.

I feel insecure sometimes, but try to keep in mind this is not the focus of the relationship.

Perceptions of Distinctions between the Genders in Identification with the Body

Every respondent, except one who was “unsure,” agreed that men and women identify with their bodies in different ways. Some insightful responses to the question, “Do you think that men and women identify with their bodies in different ways?” follow:

I think that both men and women have an ideal body idea that they strive to attain.

Men want to be muscular and manly; women want to be toned but feminine. Both have insecurities, though in different forms.

Yes. Men I think see the body as a source of strength and power, whereas women see it as a means of attractiveness.

Yes, men and women think differently about many things. Women want to have the ‘ideal’ body and look good to others. I think men do it for themselves more than for other people.

Men want large muscles and women want to be little.

I think that men base more of their self-image on their strength and women place more of it on their looks.

For women, the body frequently defines who they are and how they see themselves.

They see it as their means of attracting men and earning others' approval.

Men tend to accept their bodies as they are, eating what they want, exercising when they can and going on with life. Women tend to obsess over every detail and flaw they think they have and work hard to change it. Women will do whatever it takes to not miss a workout or skip a meal here and there, men do what they can and move on and would rarely think of needing or wanting to skip a meal or kill themselves to get a workout in.

I'd say that women are much more concerned with their bodies, or at least think about them a lot more than men. At the gym, there are girls who will do cardio to no end, who are not athletes in training but working to achieve some kind of perfect image. And then there are the weight-lifting guys who are clearly checking their form, but checking themselves out, in the mirrors. When it comes to eating, however, it is rarer for guys to be picky eaters due to body concerns, whereas it is quite common and more accepted for girls. For a lot of girls at my school, I think they view their bodies as ways to attract men, and they need to fit some sort of ideal so they can wear the skimpy clothes that will make them 'attractive.' For men, I don't think they view their bodies as the sole way to attract women, so maybe they don't put the same level of emphasis on their bodies that women do.

Men are more worried about their body's performance: sexually, physically, etc. A woman ties her self-worth into how thin her body is.

Men desire to protect and feel strong; women desire to feel beautiful and cherished.

We long to be seen as different things. But both long to be seen.

For men, their bodies are tools, women's are art.

Men are supposed to be fit and women are supposed to be soft, yet they always want to be skinny.

For men it is the issue of power, feeling capable; for women it is more an issue of feeling desirable.

Women have been told that much of their worth comes from their outer beauty.

Perceptions of Church as Resource for Body Issue Questions or Concerns

Varied responses to the question, "In what ways has your church been or not been a resource for you in answering questions about or dealing with body issues that have been a concern to you?" follow:

My church has not made these issues a priority in their ministry. They are lacking resources regarding these issues.

My church is very good about talking about grace and makes sure that we all know that a marriage is a great way to show grace to one another. They do not, however, address the issues of what men and women really thing about, so for a long time, I knew that I didn't fit the ideal and that no man would be truly happy with my body, but that he would show me grace by loving me no matter what. Also, few of the women in my church have jobs. Most are stay-at-home moms who go to the country club and work out all day.

They were all thin and said I should be, too.

It hasn't. Well, there are opportunities to work out and go to aerobics classes.

There has never been a real resource in my church for such feelings.

It hasn't really dealt with that aspect of my life.

I've hardly ever heard anything from the church about healthy body image.

Not at all—my church never really touches on these issues.

My church never really directly answered any questions that I have had dealing with body image.

This is a difficult question to answer. My church has recently begun to address emotional issues people deal with rather than pretend they don't exist. A year ago, we ran a women's counseling course and the women attending could discuss their eating habits. The young women's Bible study at my church also read through Every Young Woman's Battle and spent one night talking about body image.

In some ways my church's emphasis on modesty has been a good thing, but at the same time the emphasis on modesty and not showing your body at all often makes me just feel guiltier about showing any skin, even if it's just my midriff on accident.

I wish the church had emphasized modesty at an earlier age.

The majority of people in my church haven't helped; if anything, they have made it worse sometimes.

I think that having one person related to the church to talk to about body issues would have been helpful.

The church is not really a good resource as this issue is rarely addressed.

It hasn't. Well, there are opportunities to work out and go to aerobics classes.

It has not been except for a focus on marriage, family, and modesty.

It has taught me that to strive for the image is vain and useless and only God's opinion matters.

The church has emphasized the importance of being beautiful in God's eyes and respecting your body. Therefore, I feel that if I let God have control over my body, then I'll be in His image and what could be prettier?

I used to have a Sunday School teacher whose wife talked about keeping a neat appearance. She said you can glorify God even in your appearance.

I have great friends and mentors in the church that are constantly telling me how much the Lord loves me, and that keeps my mind off myself.

I went to a women's Bible study where we discussed such issues in detail and it was a great help.

My church has been a very positive influence on my body image as they teach me to see my worth in Christ.

Perceptions of Any Christian Organization or Publication as a Resource for Body Issues

When asked if they had found any Christian publication or organization helpful in terms of dealing with body issues or concerns, twenty-three women responded in the affirmative and seventy reported that they had not. Six participants answered that this question was not applicable, and three did not answer.

Investigation of the responses to images in consumer culture (questions three through five on the survey) of the twenty-three women who had found a Christian publication or organization helpful discovered ratings with means of four for all three questions related to emotional pain, intellectual energy, and physical energy expense in response to images in consumer culture.

Twenty of the respondents mentioned the specific publication or organization that they

believed had been helpful to them. The publications included: *Captivating* by John and Stasi Eldridge, articles in *Relevant* magazine, *Passion and Purity* by Elizabeth Elliott, *Emotional Purity* by Elizabeth Elliott, *Every Young Woman's Battle* by Shannon Ethridge and Steve Arterburn, *One Size Fits All* by Liz Curtis, *Brio* magazine, and *Boundless* webzine. Organizations that the women specified as helpful included: Campus Outreach, Campus Crusade for Christ, Reformed University Fellowship, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

The responses to images in consumer culture of the seventy women who had not found a Christian publication or organization helpful in terms of dealing with body issues had means of five regarding emotional pain, five regarding intellectual energy, and four in physical energy.

As in the analysis in Chapter Five of the perceived helpfulness of the church in relation to body issue concerns, this data suggests a minimal difference in intellectual energy expense among those who report that they have been positively influenced. It also suggests a slight difference in emotional pain. This raises the question as to whether or not the resource they perceived to have been helpful did indeed provide help in terms of recognizing the impact of images on their identity. None of the women commented on the specific ways that the resource had made a difference for them.

Tension between Consumerism and Christianity

In response to whether or not they sensed tension between consumerism and Christianity, the women stated:

The consumer (the world) always battles the worshipper (truth) and tells us it is better—The world wants us in it.

Yes, when I deal with body image issues.

I sense a spiritual battle always going on inside me. Part of me wants to be a worshipper, and the other part of me wants to buy into what the world is feeding me.

Yes. I feel that the drive and need to buy things is often from an earthly motivation And not an eternal perspective. Instant gratification is prized in our culture.

Yes. It is harder to worship when I am focusing on all the earthly things I desire to have.

It is more difficult to feel satisfied in Christ when I spend lots of time wanting to Improve my physical appearance.

Yes, there is definitely something wrong with my percentages.

Yes, the media definitely gets more attention in my life than it should.

Yes. Sometimes at night I should be reading my Bible, and I consciously think about that, but choose to read something else instead.

I think Satan uses one as a distraction from the other.

Yes, The consumer mindset is cluttered and busy; there is no time for God to work.

Sometimes, but I think the tension is more prevalent when I freak out trying to be 'holy' all the time, rather than just focusing on living life as God would want me to, whether I am in the world or in church.

Yes. I see how easy it is to slip into the mindset of the world.

Definitely. That is why having a Christian support system is so important.

Yes, I feel like being a consumer distracts me from worshipping, and I feel guilty for being a consumer when I want to be a worshipper.

Yes. But I am a consumer in a worldly sense but even in this world, I am a worshipper of Christ.

Yes. They are warring against each other.

Yes. When if feel the consumer part I counteract it with preaching the Gospel to myself.

Yes. Being a consumer is really just to please/worship myself.

Sometimes. All belongings are God's yet I view them as mine.

Yes. I haven't given it any thought until now.

No. For me there is more idealized elite athleticism versus understanding my place as a worshipper.

No, I have never really thought about the two together. As a Christian, I try (by God's grace) to not have a "spiritual life" separate from real life. Therefore, my life is centered on Christ and my actions are determined thereby.

There is tension, but I do believe you can be a worshiper and consumer simultaneously.

No, I am a Christian hedonist and I think consuming can be worship as long as you are thanking God for it.

Bibliography

- Abraham, Suzanne. F. "Dieting, body weight, body image, and self-esteem in young women: Doctor's dilemmas." *Medical Journal of Australia* 178, (2003): 607-611.
- American Psychological Association, *Adolescence*, accessed 2 July 2005 from <http://www.apa.org/pil/pii/develop/pdf>.
- Arterburn, Stephen, and Ethridge, Shannon. *Every Young Woman's Battle: Guiding Your Mind, Heart, and Body in a Sex-Saturated World*. Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 2004.
- Ashcroft, Mary E. *Balancing Act: How Women Can Lose Their Roles and Find Their Callings*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996.
- Babbie, Earl R. *Research Methods for Social Work*. 2nd ed.. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks Cole Publishing Company, 1993.
- Barclay, William. *Flesh and Spirit: An Examination of Galatians*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1962.
- Barger, Lillian C. *Eve's Revenge: Women and a Spirituality of the Body*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2003.
- Barna, George. *Think Like Jesus: Make the Right Decision Every Time*. Nashville, TN: Integrity Publishers, 2003.
- Barnes, Linda L., G.A. Plotnikoff, K. Fox, and S. Pendleton. "Spirituality, Religion, and Pediatrics: Intersecting Worlds of Healing." *Pediatrics* 104, no. 6 (October 2000):899-908.
- Barthel, Tara K., and Dabler, Judy. *Peace Making Women: Biblical Hope for Resolving Conflict*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005.

- Beck, James R., and Blomberg, Craig L., eds. *Two Views on Women in Ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.
- Belenky, Mary F., B.M. Clinchy, N.R. Goldberger, and J.M. Tarule. *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind*. New York: BasicBooks, 1986.
- Bell, Rudolph. *Holy Anorexia*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985.
- Bloom, Allan. *The Closing of the American Mind*. New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1987.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Creation and Fall*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966.
- Botterweck, Johannes, and Helmar Ringrenn, eds. *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975.
- Boyd, Karin R., and Dennis W. Hrycaiko. "The effect of a physical activity intervention package on the self-esteem of preadolescent and adolescent females." *Adolescence* 32, no. 127 (1997): 693-709.
- Brand, Paul, and Philip Yancey. *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1980.
- Brand, Paul, and Philip Yancey. *In His Image*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984.
- Brown, Paige B. Speaker "Kingdom Matters." 2006 International Women in the Church Pre-Conference Seminars. Lawrenceville, GA: Christian Education and Publications, 2006. Compact Disc.

Browning, Elizabeth B. "Aurora Leigh." In *The Complete Poetical Works of Elizabeth .*

Browning, ed. Preston, Harriet P., 254. Cambridge Edition, 1974.

Brumberg, Joan J. *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls*. New

York: Random House, 1997.

Brunner, Emil. *Man in Revolt*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1947.

Brunner, Emil. *I and Thou*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958.

Budziszewski, J. *How to Stay Christian in College*. Colorado Springs, CO:

NavPress, 1999.

Bushnell, Katherine G. *God's Word to Women*. Mossville, IL: "God's Word to

Women Publishers," 1923.

Cairns, David. *The Image of God in Man*. London: Fontana Library of

Theology and Philosophy, 1973.

Callaghan, Karen A., ed. *Ideals of Feminine Beauty: Philosophical, Social, and*

Cultural Dimensions. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994.

Christian Booksellers Association. accessed 12 December 2004 from

<http://www.cba.com>.

Collins, Gail. *America's Women: 400 years of Dolls, Drudges, Helpmates, and*

Heroines. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2003.

Couchman, Judith. *The Woman Behind The Mirror: Finding Inward Satisfaction with*

Your Outward Appearance. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman, 1997.

Craft, Lynn, K.A. Pfeiffer, and J.M. Pivarnik. "Predictors of physical competence in

adolescent girls." *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 32, no. 6 (June 2003): 441-446.

- Crocker, Peter. "Predicting change in physical activity, dietary restraint, and social physique anxiety in adolescent girls: Examining covariance in physical self-perceptions." *Canadian Journal of Public Health* 94, no. 5 (May 2003): 332-337.
- Cross, B.A. "Adolescent females, physical activity participation, and dating violence." Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 2003.
- Dooyeweerd, Herman. *Roots of Western Culture: Pagan, Secular, and Christian Options*. Toronto: Wedge, 1979.
- Duby, Georges, and Michelle Perrot, general eds., P.S.Pantel ed. *A History of Women in the West, Volume I: From Ancient Goddesses to Christian Saints*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992.
- Duby, Georges, and Michelle Perrot, general eds., Christine Kaplisch-Zuber, ed. *A History of Women in the West, Volume II: Silences of the Middle Ages*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994.
- Duby, Georges, and Michelle Perrot, general eds., Natalie Z. Davis, and Arlette Farge, eds. *A History of Women in the West, Volume III: Renaissance and Enlightenment Paradoxes*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994.
- Duby, Georges., and Michelle Perrot, general eds., Genevieve Fraisse, and Michelle Perrot, eds. *A History of Women in the West, Volume IV: Emerging Feminism from Revolution to World War*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1995.
- Duby, Georges, and Michelle Perrot, general eds., Francoise Thebaud, ed. *A History of Women in the West, Volume V: Toward a Cultural Identity in the Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996.

- Durant, Will. *Our Oriental Heritage*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954.
- Durant, Will. *Age of Faith*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950.
- Eagle, Carol, and Carol Colman. *All That She Can Be: Helping Your Daughter Achieve Her Full Potential and Maintain Her Self-Esteem During the Critical Years*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997.
- Edwards, Sue., and Kelley Mathews. *New Doors in Ministry to Women: A Fresh Model for Transforming Your Church, Campus, of Mission Field*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2002.
- Ekeland, E., F. Heian, K.B. Hagen, J. Abbott, and L. Nordheim. "Exercise to improve self-esteem in children and young people." Oxford: The Cochrane Library, 2004, accessed 27 June 2005 from <http://searchepnet.com>.
- Elkind, David. *The hurried child: Growing up too fast too soon*, 3rd ed. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing, 2001.
- Elwell, Walter.A., ed. *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1989.
- Field, Alison E., L. Cheung, A.M. Wolf, D.B. Herzog, S.L. Gortmaker, and G.A. Colditz. "Exposure to mass media and weight concern among girls." *Pediatrics* 103, (2004): 36-39.
- Fitzpatrick, Elyse, and Carol Cornish, general eds. *Women Helping Women: A Biblical Guide to the Major Issues Women Face*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 1997.
- Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1983.

- Furnham, Adrian, Nichola Badmin, and Ian Sneade, "Body image dissatisfaction: Gender differences in eating attitudes, self-esteem, and reasons for exercise." *The Journal of Psychology* 136, no. 6 (2002): 581-596.
- Gilligan, Carol. *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982.
- Godfrey, Joline. *Raising Financially Fit Kids*. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press, 2003.
- Grenz, Stanley. *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995.
- Gruber, J.J. (1986). "Physical activity and self-esteem development in children: A meta-analysis." In Stull, G., and H. Eckert, eds. *Effects of physical activity on children*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, pp. 30-48.
- Grudem, Wayne, and John Piper. *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991.
- Heil, J., and C. Koch. *Created in God's Image: Meditating on Our Body*. Winona, MN: Saint Mary's Press, 1991.
- Hicks, Cynthia., and R. Hicks. *The Feminine Journey: Understanding the Biblical Stages of a Woman's Life*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1994.
- Hubach, Stephanie. "Identity Crises: Centrality of the Image of God to Relationships." 2006 International Women in the Church Pre-conference Seminars. Lawrenceville, GA: Christian Education and Publications, 2006. Compact Disc.
- Hubbard, M.Gay. *Women: The Misunderstood Majority*. Dallas, Texas: Word Publishing, 1992.
- Ingram, Chip, and T. Walker. *Sex 180*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2005.

- Jacobi, C., T. Paul, M. deZwaan, D.O. Nutzinger, and B. Dahme. "Specificity of self-concept disturbances in eating disorders." *International Journal of Eating Disorders* 35, no. 2 (February 2004): 204-210.
- James, Jack E. "Health psychology and the scientist-practitioner model." *Australian Psychologist* 29, no. 1 (January 2004): 5-11.
- Jewitt, Paul.K., and Marguerite Shuster. *Who Are We?: Our Dignity as Human*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996.
- Kaiser, Walter C. "Paul, women, and the church." *Worldwide Challenge* (September 1976).
- Kassian, Mary. *The Feminist Mistake: The Radical Impact of Feminism on the Church and Culture*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2005.
- Keener, Craig. *Paul, Women, and Wives: Marriage and Women's Ministry in the Letters of Paul*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992.
- Kittel, Gerhard., ed. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971.
- Koenig, Harold G. *Is Religion Good for Your Health?: The Effects of Religion on Physical and Mental Health*. New York: The Hayworth Pastoral Press, 1997.
- Lee-Thorp, Karen C., and Cynthia Hicks. *Why Beauty Matters*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1997.
- Lewis, Clive S. *The Chronicles of Narnia*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1950.
- Lewis, Clive S. *The Problem of Pain*. New York: MacMillan, 1962.
- Lewis, David, and Darren Bridger. *The Soul of the New Consumer*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2000.

- Ludy, Eric, and Leslie Ludy. *Teaching True Love to a Sex-at-13 Generation: The Ultimate Guide for Parents*. Nashville, TN: W Publishing Group, 2005.
- Mathews, Alice P. *A Woman God Can Lead*. Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House, 1998.
- Mathews, A.P., and M. Gay Hubbard. *Marriage Made in Eden: A Pre-modern Perspective for a Post-modern World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004.
- McCabe, Marita P., and Lina A. Ricciardelli. "Body image and strategies to lose weight and increase muscle among boys and girls. *Health Psychology* 22, no. 1 (January 2003): 39-46.
- McDonald, Hugh D. *The Christian View of Man*. Westchester, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1981.
- McInman, A.D., & Berger, B.G. (1993). Self-concept and mood changes associated with aerobic dance. *Australian Journal of Psychology* 45, no. 3 (1993): 134-140.
- McNeal, James U. *Kids As Consumers*. New York: Lexington Books, 1992.
- McNeal, James U. *The Kids Market: Myths and Realities*. Ithaca, NY: Paramount Market Publishing, 1999.
- Medved, Michael. *Hollywood versus America*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1992.
- Micks, Marianne H. *Humanity in the Image of God*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1982.
- Mooij, Maneke de. *Consumer Behavior and Culture: Consequences for Global Marketing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004.

Moore, Beth. "Living Beyond Yourself: Exploring the Fruit of the Spirit: Session 10."

Nashville, TN: LifeWay Church Resources: Women's Enrichment Resources, 2005.

Digital video disc.

Moreland, James P., and Scott B. Rae. *Body and Soul: Human Nature and the Crisis in Ethics*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

Muggeridge, Malcolm. *Christ and the Media*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977.

Nagel, M. (2003). The relationship of the female athlete triad with psychocognitive factors and balance. *Journal of Exercise Science and Fitness* 1, no.2 (2003): 116-124.

Neumark-Sztainer, Dianne, N.E. Sherwood, T. Collier, T. Hannan, and T. Pergrin.

"Primary prevention of disordered eating among preadolescent girls: Feasibility and short-term effect of a community-based intervention." *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 100, no.12 (December 2000): 1455-1474.

Newman, Deborah. *Loving Your Body*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2002.

Nichter, Mimi. "Listening to girls talk about their bodies." *Reclaiming Children and Youth* 9, no. 3 (March 2000): 182-189.

Northup, Christine. *Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom: Creating Physical and Emotional Health and Healing*. New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1994.

O'dea, Jennifer. "Evidence for a self-esteem approach to the prevention of body image and eating problems among children and adolescents." *Eating Disorders* 12, no. 3 (2004): 225-239.

Olmstead, Marion, and T. McFarlane. "Body weight and body image." *BMC Women's Health* 4, no. 1 (January 2004): 1-9.

Park, J. (2003). Adolescent self-concept and health into adulthood. *Health Report*, 14, 41-52.

Paulsell, Stephanie. *Honoring the Body: Meditations on a Christian Practice*, New York: Jossey Bass, 2002.

Pearcey, Nancy R. *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from its Cultural Captivity*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004.

Pipher, Mary. *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*. New York: Putnam's Sons, 1994.

President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports Report. "Physical activity and sport in the lives of girls and physical and mental dimensions from an interdisciplinary approach." 1997, accessed 1 July 2005; available from <http://www.kls.coled.umn.edu/crgws>.

Robert, Dana. L. *American Women in Mission: A Social History of Their Thought and Practice*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996.

Sarafino, Edward P. *Health Psychology: Biopsychosocial Interactions*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2002.

Schaeffer, Francis A. *The Complete Works of Francis Schaeffer, Volume I*. Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 1982.

Shores, Stephen D. "Image of God and the Flesh: An Exploration of the Image of God and the Flesh as a Basis for a Biblical Counseling Model." Doctoral dissertation., South Hamilton, MA: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 1999.

Shorter, Edward. *A History of Women's Bodies*. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1982.

Sumner, Sarah. *Men and Women in the Church: Building Consensus on Christian Leadership*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003.

Tackett, Del. "The Truth Project." Colorado Springs, CO: Focus on the Family, 2005. Compact Disc.

Temkin, Owsei. *Hippocrates in a World of Pagans and Christians*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1991.

The Boston Women's Health Collective. *Our Bodies, Ourselves*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1976.

The Holy Bible. New American Standard version.

Biblical references cited in the body of the text.

Thompson, Angela M., and Karen Chad. "The relationship of pubertal status to body image, social physique anxiety, preoccupation with weight, and nutritional status in young females." *Canadian Journal of Public Health* 9, no. 3 (2000): 207-212.

Tiggerman, M., and S. Williamson. "The effects of exercise on body satisfaction and self-esteem as a function of gender and age." *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research* 43, no. 2 (2000): 119-127.

Tillich, Paul. *The Meaning of Health*. Richmond, VA: North Atlantic Books, 1981.

Tobias, Cynthia U. *The Way They Learn*. Colorado Springs, CO: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1998.

Tong, Rosemarie P. *Feminist Thought: A Comprehensive Introduction*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998.

Travilla, Carol, and Joan C. Webb. *The Intentional Woman: A Guide to Experiencing the Power of Your Story*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2002.

Tucker, Ruth.A., and Walter Liefeld. *Daughters of the Church: Women and Ministry from New Testament Times to the Present*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1987.

United States Department of Health and Human Services. (n.d.). "Physical activity and health: Adolescents and young adults." accessed 1 July 2005; available from <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/sgr/npa.htm>.

United States Department of Health and Human Services. *Physical activity and health: A report of the Surgeon General executive summary*. 1996, accessed 1 July 2005; available from <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/sgr/htm-11k>.

Van Leeuwen, Mary S. *Am I My Brother's Keeper?: What the Social Services Don't Tell Us About Masculinity*. Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002.

Weate, Jeremy, and Peter Lawman. *A Young Person's Guide to Philosophy*. New York: DK Publishing, Inc., 1998.

Webster's ninth collegiate dictionary. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 1983.

Weil, Simone. *Waiting for God*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1973.

Welch, Edward T. *When People Are Big and God is Small: Overcoming Peer Pressure, Codependency, and the Fear of Man*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: P & R Publishing, 1997.

Wise, Carroll A. *Religion in Illness and Health*. New York: Harper Collins, 1942.

Wolen, Steven J., and Sybil Wolen. *The Resilient Self: How Survivors of Troubled Families Rise Above Adversity*. New York: Villard, 1993.

Wolf, Betty Jean. Speaker. "War for the Hearts and Minds of Young Women." 2006
International Women in the Church Pre-conference Seminars. Lawrenceville, GA:
Christian Education and Publication. Compact disc.

Wolf, Naomi. *The Beauty Myth*. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1991.

Yancey, Philip. "Holy Sex: How it ravishes our Souls." *Christianity Today*. 30 September
2003, accessed 30 December 2005; available from
<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/010/3.46.html>

Zacharias, Ravi. Speaker. "Biblical Authority and Our Cultural Crisis: Cultural
Relativism and the Emasculation of Truth." Atlanta, GA: Ravi Zacharias International
Ministries, 1993. Compact disc.

Zacharias, Ravi. Speaker. "Jesus Among Other Gods: The Absolute Claims of the
Christian Message." Nashville, TN: Nelson Multimedia Group, 2001. Videotape.

Zacharias, Ravi. Speaker. "Christ, the Arts, and the Media." Atlanta,
GA: Ravi Zacharias International Ministries. Tape recording.

Zachary, Lois J. *The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships*.
San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2000.

Zaltman, Gerald. *How Customers Think: Essential Insights into the Mind of the
Market*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2003.

Vita

The author was born on January 20, 1964, the seventh child of doctors Francis and Josephine Sullivan. She has fond memories of growing up in Greer, South Carolina, where she came to know the saving grace of Jesus Christ and acknowledged His claim upon her life. She attended Carson-Newman College followed by the Medical University of South Carolina to complete her B.S. in Physical Therapy. She began practicing as a physical therapist in her hometown and earned her Masters in Health Administration in the early years of her career. She later received her doctorate in physical therapy. Dr. Jonathan Hicklin asked for her hand in marriage, and they were wed in May of 1992. They moved to Texas, where he completed his residency in ophthalmology as she continued her work as a physical therapist in administrative positions. They were blessed with two children, Joy Caroline and Andrew. Returning to South Carolina and residing in Rock Hill, they joined Westminster Presbyterian Church. The author became involved in church and community ministries with children and women, and was asked to serve as the director of women's ministries for Westminster Presbyterian Church. She will receive her Doctor of Ministry degree in Effective Ministries to Women from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in May of 2007.